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Dems Go Negative

Return of the Ugly American?

NATIONAL REVIEW

WHY KEMP *and* BENNETT *are* WRONG *on* IMMIGRATION

Wm. F. Buckley Jr. ✦ John O'Sullivan

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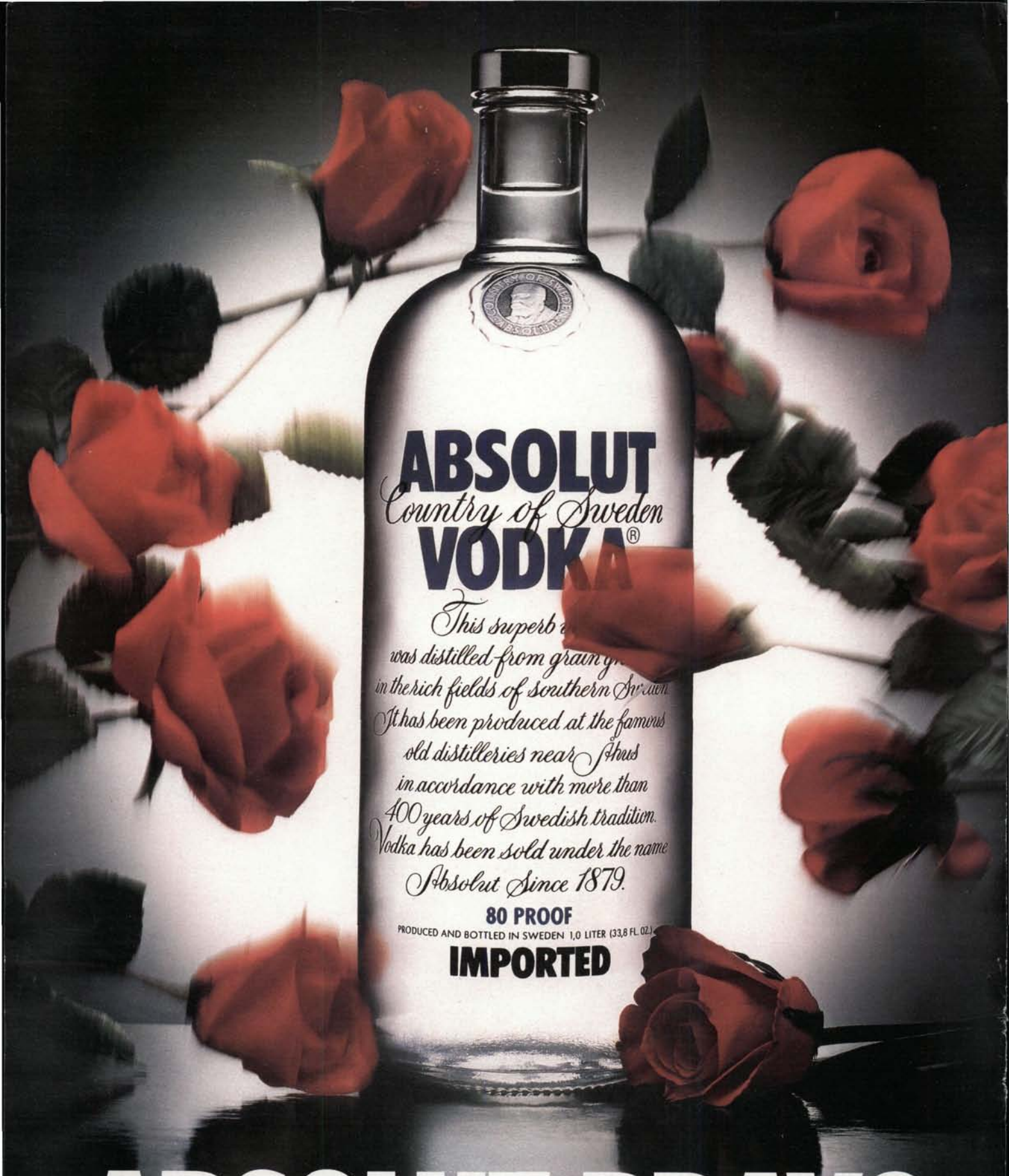
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NATIONAL REVIEW

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Letters

Making Waves

Michael Vlahos penned a mostly terrific essay on party realignment ["The New Wave," Sept. 26], bringing a Thomas Kuhn–like analysis to the evolution of political parties and mapping a clear path for Republicans in particular, one I'm pleased to see many already following.

He got a couple of specifics wrong, though, in his eagerness to illustrate a gap between the views of "rank-and-file" Republicans and "party leaders." He cited three recent examples, only one of which is legitimate: the Bush White House's embrace of a "civil rights" bill that fosters quotas by another name, notwithstanding the voting public's opposition.

But he's wrong to use John Chafee on health reform as an example of GOP "eagerness to work with the Clinton agenda." Senator Chafee is a decent, well-meaning man, but his views on a number of issues (perhaps especially health-care reform) represent the Republican Party fringe, not its leadership.

And Vlahos is even more wrong to say that school choice does not "excite" party leaders and to suggest that former Education Secretary Lamar Alexander "had to be reminded to include it." That's simply false. I've worked with Mr. Alexander on education issues for 13 years now, and he is, and long has been, a staunch advocate of school choice, which loomed large in his policy proposals from the day he was sworn in.

The record shows that George Bush was himself a convert to the choice issue. At the beginning of his Administration, he was cool toward versions that include private schools. (So was then-Secretary Lauro Cavazos.) But the scales soon fell from his eyes. In this regard, Mr. Alexander's return to Washington in early 1991 may have helped.

But the Republicans in Congress with the most to say about education policy, including the ranking members of key subcommittees, have long scorned choice and the rest of the "radical" education-reform agenda that Mr. Vlahos appears to favor. I favor it, too, as do two out of the last three GOP education secretaries and both recent Republican Presidents. That it hasn't gotten very far on Capitol Hill is partly due to Democratic resistance, to be sure, but partly because of coolness on the part of influential congressional Republicans. That's what kept Lamar Alexander's "GI Bill for Kids" from being enacted, not any lack of ardor or commitment on his part.

Chester Finn
Chevy Chase, Md.

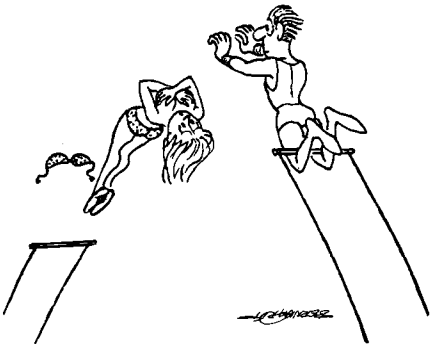
Michael Vlahos errs in writing that Lamar Alexander "had to be reminded" to include school choice in his package of reforms and that "it was never pushed aggressively." That is not true. As Assistant Secretary in Lamar Alexander's Department of Education, I can testify that he pushed it regularly, aggressively, and sincerely. He pushed it not because someone told him to, but because he believes in market solutions. I accompanied him to numerous public events at which he explained why families should be able to use their tax dollars to send their children to the school of their choice; I was there when he framed a $500-million legislative proposal called "A GI Bill for Kids" that would have created full-choice demonstrations in major cities.

Vlahos is right, however, about party leaders on this issue. The Republicans who chair the relevant committees in the House and Senate are decidedly cool to school choice; their staff members were not just cool, but actively hostile to it. That made Secretary Alexander's advocacy of the issue extremely difficult.

Diane Ravitch
Brooklyn, N.Y.

"The New Wave" by Michael Vlahos—brilliant, absolutely brilliant! Give us more of this kind of writing.

Peter Baldari
New York, N.Y.



Sometimes it feels good to be wrong. It feels good to know that a serious candidate in the running "has long been a champion . . ." It feels good especially to get such tenacity in defense of Lamar Alexander. I had read his speeches from a couple of years ago and, frankly, they were in the middle-way mainstream mold: "Let's give them the voice of reason, the promise of good government, an ethos of high-mindedness in public service." Today's betrayed citizenry will have none of that hooey. And Alexander—very much to his credit—has spent the last year and more out there listening to the people. His re-entry into imperial politics (i.e., Washington politics) comes with a new trumpet voluntary: "Cut their pay and send them home." I like its reverberation. It's not quite up there with "Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men," but it's sure a good start. Guts will be needed to carry the day in '96. If Republicans really want to be the People's Party, they will need to help Americans answer the big questions, like: Where are we going and how do we get there? —MV

Not Dueling the Issue

I was disappointed with the snide and unwarranted references to Representative Nancy Johnson (R., Conn.) in "The Week" [Aug. 15]. While Mrs. Johnson is more moderate than many other House Republicans and effective in influencing our conference to her point of view, she is fiscally conservative and one of the most energetic and thoughtful members and a constructive team player.

Mrs. Johnson has been one of the two or three most influential Republicans in the health-care debate and the first moderate supporter of Newt Gingrich. She continues to be a strong supporter, because though she doesn't always agree with our Whip, she too understands the importance of an aggressive, action-oriented Republican Party, broad enough in its vision to attract a majority.

Jon Kyl
Member of Congress
Washington, D.C.

Our criticism was less of Nancy Johnson, who has a right to her principles, than of GOP leaders who compromise their own principles, and those of their constituents, in order to mollify her. But if she walks like a duck . . . —ED.

Innocent Deaths?

Stephen Markman ["Innocents on Death Row," Sept. 12] argues that Justice Blackmun was ill-advised to rely on our research in his recent and widely publicized rejection of the death penalty.

We believe Mr. Markman's argument is

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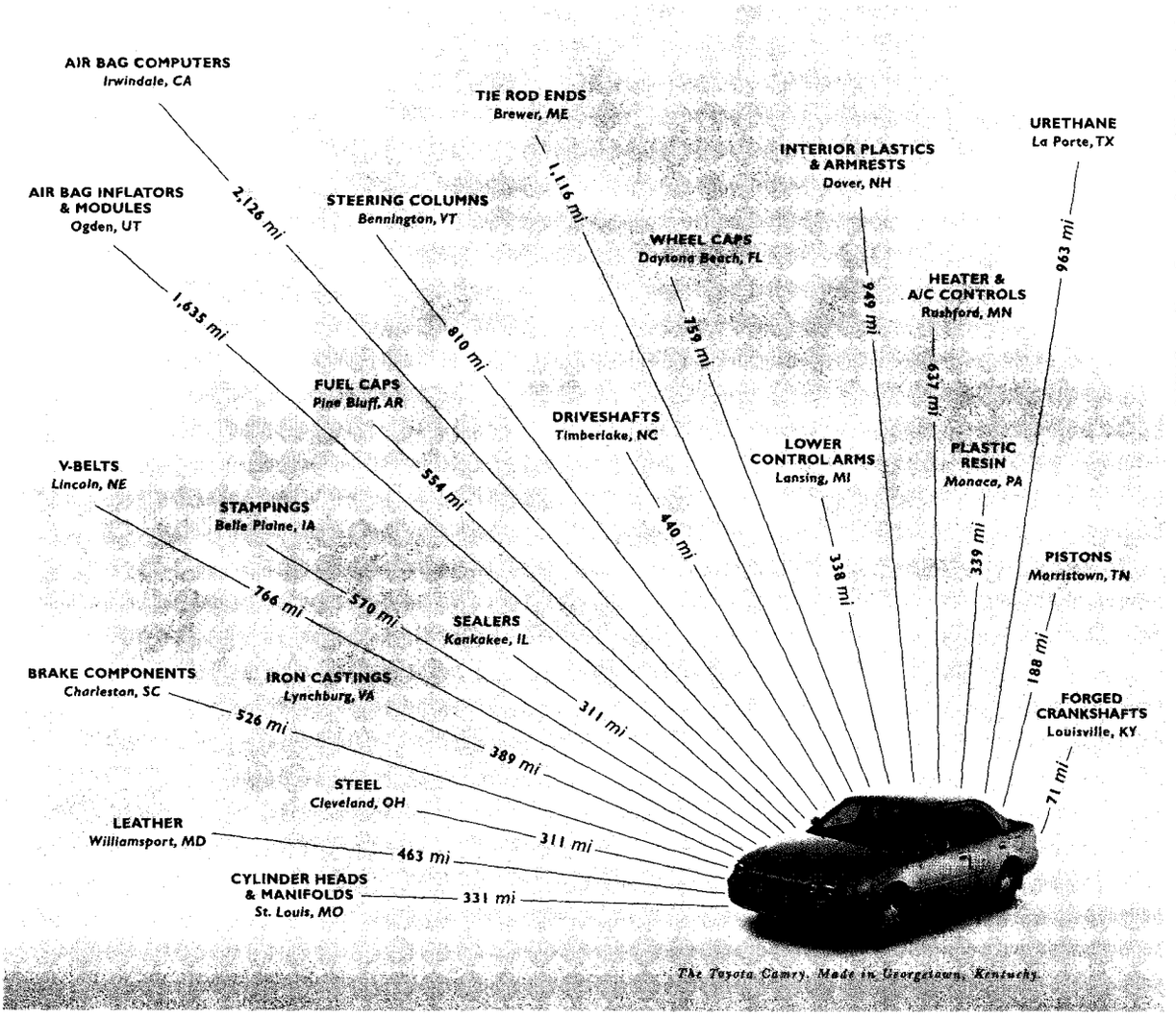

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flawed. First, he states that our research "fails to prove that a single such mistake has occurred during the century." But we are never told what Mr. Markman would consider as "proof." In reality, hundreds of cases we document in our book *In Spite of Innocence* make the certainty of erroneous executions crystal clear. Mr. Markman has never done original research on this issue; he simply took a dozen of the 23 cases we list as erroneous executions and rehashed the case for the prosecution. He simply ignores the very reasonable doubts about guilt that these cases contain.

He alleges that "in each of the cases" of wrongful execution we cite, "where there is a record to review, there are eyewitnesses, confessions, physical evidence, and circumstantial evidence in support of the defendant's guilt." This is false; in the Lindbergh-baby kidnapping-murder, for example, there were no eyewitnesses, no physical evidence, and no confession. Moreover, as our research shows, in hundreds of cases where miscarriages were admitted by the state but no one was executed—cases Mr. Markman does not contest—there were also eyewitnesses, physical evidence, and circumstantial evidence and, yes, even false confessions in support of the defendant's guilt.

Our research, he tells his readers, shows "the extraordinary rarity of error in capital punishment." Unlike us, Mr. Markman is not troubled by the many "close calls"—innocents who escaped wrongful executions only at the last few hours and only with incredible luck. And he fails to mention that we examined the record in at most a few hundred of the 7,000 executions in this century.

One of the main tenets of conservative thought is to distrust big government. There is no reason to assume that governments make their life-and-death decisions with any more skill and perspicacity than they exercise in running the post office or the welfare system.

Hays Adam Bedau *Michael L. Radelet*
London, England *Gainesville, Fla.*

Contrary to what Messrs. Radelet and Bedau assert, I am not unmoved by "close calls" in the application of the death penalty. I simply dispute that such "close calls" support Justice Blackmun's proposition that "innocent persons have been executed . . . under our death penalty scheme." Further, I believe that it is a stretch of rhetoric to describe as "close calls" capital sentences overturned on the basis of an appeal or the exercise of judicial sentencing discretion when such institutions are a permanent part of the criminal-justice system. The Bedau–Radelet study does not purport to survey capital cases at random but only the most suspect of the 7,000 executions in this century. Yet, even from this starting point, all that the authors demonstrate is that there have been "close calls." Professor Radelet accuses me of "rehashing" the case for the prosecution. Fair enough, since I had made the identical point about his "rehashing" the defense case. What is most pertinent, however, is that 12 jurors concluded unanimously in each of these cases that the prosecution's case was the more believable—"beyond a reasonable doubt." Not having been an eyewitness to these crimes, I cannot vouch for the correctness of these decisions. I merely suggest that the jury's conclusions, as well as those of multiple reviewing judges, serve to place the burden of persuasion on those who would characterize these executions as "erroneous." In my judgment, Messrs. Radelet and Bedau have not met that burden and Justice Blackmun has not met his burden of relying on sound evidence as a basis for altering the requirements of the United Staes Constitution. —*SM*

Safely Armed

I read with interest "Gun Town U.S.A., Revisited" by Luther M. Boggs Jr. [Aug. 15]. Kennesaw is the town where every household is required to have a firearm and ammunition. Since the law was passed in 1982, the number of "burglaries per 1,000" has dropped from 11 to under 3. During the same period, the population of Kennesaw was doubling, normally a situation that adds to the crime rate.

The Kennesaw Gun Law has exploded a number of liberal myths regarding private gun ownership:

Myth 1) *The easy availability of firearms in the household will contribute to a rise in domestic violence.* There have been no crimes of domestic violence in Kennesaw since the law was passed in 1982. Myth 2) *The easy availability of firearms in the household will contribute to an increase in accidental injuries to children.* There have been no injuries to children involving guns since the law was passed. Of course, in the South, parents tend to teach children at an early age how to handle a firearm. Myth 3) *The more guns available in an area, the more violent crime.* Since the law was passed, violent crime has gone *down,* not up. The last murder involving a gun in Kennesaw was in 1986.

The results of the gun law in Kennesaw undercut the whole premise of the Brady Bill, and the current attempt to ban assault rifles.

Robert Jones
Kennesaw, Ga.

Pataki Good Enough

Why are conservatives such as Richard Brookhiser dissing George Pataki and allowing Mario Cuomo to define the Republican candidate ["Super Mario," Oct. 10]? Scrubbing through his thesaurus, Mr. Brookhiser calls Pataki "a homunculus grown in a retort by Senator Alfonse D'Amato" as a way of rephrasing "a D'Amato clone." I knew George Pataki at Yale, where we were both party chairmen in the Political Union. From what I know of Pataki, *he* is using *D'Amato*. Why should it count against Mr. Pataki that he was clever enough to get the most powerful Republican in the state to support his race for governor?

Of course, we are the Big Apple, in the Empire State. Our governors build the Erie Canal, run for President, are carelessly rich, make national waves, die in the sack. We're the media capital, given to flash over substance and proud of it. But I am afraid that the soil has been eroding from around the base of that castle for the last fifty years. That edifice, built with the hard work of millions of anonymous hands, is now vacant and crumbling. No, he won't give us speeches of searing brilliance and hypocritical charm, but George Pataki will give us the first genuinely Republican governor of New York State since before Al Smith. He is a competent and trustworthy centrist Conservative. He may not be the pundits' piece of cake, but he's plenty good for the rest of us.

Frank Dobbs
New York, N.Y.

Conservatism on Screen

I was excited to read "The 100 Best Conservative Movies" [Oct. 24] by Spencer Warren, however, I was shocked that *Ben Hur* did not make the list.

Darren J. Asper
Ft. Thomas, Ky.

Hoosiers! It contains actual footage of a thoroughly obnoxious teenaged boy hauled in by his father and made to apologize in public to an adult. When was the last time you saw that in a movie?

Stephen Dreher
Liverpool, N.Y.

I enjoyed your list of movies, but excuse me, what about *Gettysburg*? The film spends four hours on devotion to duty and nobility of spirit.

Lawrence A. Krieg
Watertown, Mass.

Is there really any better conservative film than *Patton*?

William Horman
Springfield, Va.

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FROM THE EDITOR

America the Beautiful

■ I spent last week in the Virginia Tidewater where fall produced every possible variation of yellow, russet, and green as spectacularly as in New England, and in warmer weather.

Also, because the charming Tides Inn where I stayed has a steam yacht, I enjoyed this riot of color while cruising up and down the Rappahannock, raising my glass to Mother Nature.

I raised it again on the flight up the East Coast back to New York. The patchwork-quilt landscape was no less spectacular from 23,000 feet, and the outpouring into the sea of great rivers like the Susquehanna and the Delaware has created a coastline indented with bays and inlets.

Some years ago a BBC television program placed a film camera on a fighter jet and flew it around the British coast, starting and ending at Land's End.

The raw footage was fascinating; coastal features vary dramatically, from the cliffs of Dover to the Wash, even in a small island like Britain.

What made the film magical, however, was its commentary. As the plane swept past some port or stretch of coast, we were given a sketch of local history, an anecdote of some famous son, a snatch of local song or verse: a two-hour biography of the island.

Continental America's coastline is about three times the length of Britain's. So it would need a longer biography. Still, it would be gripping television. And it might help restore to Americans some glimmering of the splendor of their land and its history.

I offer the idea free to any network. (The BBC may insist on royalties.)

■ With a week to the mid-term elections, the pundits have already assessed its significance: the results will not be a rejection of government.

On the *MacNeil–Lehrer News Hour*, Roger Rosenblatt explained that when voters renounced government and all its works and pomps, they really wanted better government. And if they demanded volunteerism in place of government, they really wanted government-organized volunteerism.

Mr. Rosenblatt was not pressed to say what voters would really mean if they claimed to *like* government. It's a problem in pure theory, of course, but I suspect in that case he would prove gratifyingly literal-minded.

■ A topic on which the imagination of pundits ranges free and unconstrained is Mr. Clinton's achievements.

Their list generally includes: North Korea (where Mr. Clinton bribed the North Koreans without getting them to give up their nuclear program); NAFTA (begun by President Reagan, continued by President Bush, and passed by Newt Gingrich and the GOP when Mr. Clinton could not win over his own party); the Middle East peace deals (actually midwifed *by the Norwegians*); his economic program (half of which, the stimulus bill, was defeated and which therefore cannot be given the credit for) . . . the economic recovery (which anyway began about six months before Mr. Clinton took office.)

How long before they add the reform of health care to the list?

■ I am indebted to the Philadelphia Society and the Heritage Foundation for inviting me to speak on conservatives and immigration, so midwifing the article on page 36.

Each time, objectors improved my argument by their criticisms. So a semi-finished version was to hand when the statement on immigration by Jack Kemp and Bill Bennett provoked me to complete it. Bill Buckley was likewise stimulated to respond on California's Proposition 187 on page 78.

Mr. Kemp and Mr. Bennett are friends of *NR*'s; Mr Bennett a colleague as well. We owe each other the courtesies of debate (shown, indeed, in both Kemp–Bennett and our replies). But there is no disguising that a battle now rages within conservatism over immigration. And it will simply have to be argued out. —JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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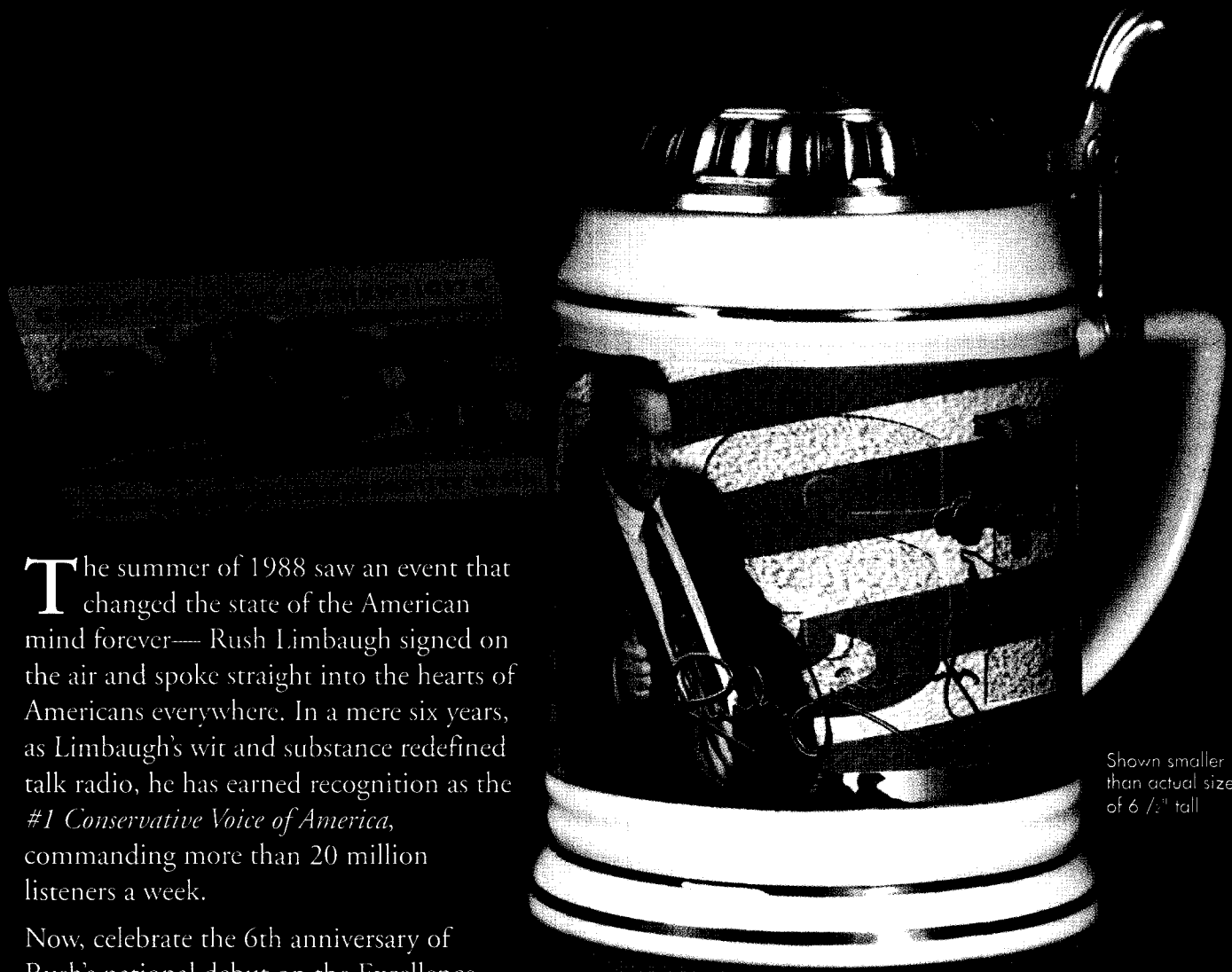

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FOR THE RECORD

■ '94 postscripts: In two debates with challenger **Mitt Romney**, Sen. **Ted Kennedy** insisted on extra-wide lectern to hide "girth," as press delicately put it. . . . "An embarrassment of riches" was how **Don Gorton** of the Greater Boston Gay-Lesbian Political Alliance described group's dilemma in choosing between gubernatorial challenger **Mark Roosevelt**—Democratic state legislator who fought for homosexual-rights bills—and incumbent Republican **William Weld**, whom Boston militants call "the most pro-gay governor in the country." . . . N.Y. Gov. **Mario Cuomo** had his bizarre moments during final weeks as he lamented he was not writing his own TV ads, asked **Madonna** at a **Clinton** fundraiser to tell wife he was a sex symbol (Clinton also asked singer for autograph for daughter **Chelsea**), and had two stormy exchanges with *N.Y. Daily News* owner **Mort Zuckerman**, which led to *News*'s endorsement of opponent, **George Pataki**. . . . Best discarded name for Senate political committee: Women for **Huffington** decided against calling selves "California Babes for the Stud-Muffin." . . . Best quote: Senate candidate Rep. **Jon Kyl** (R., Ariz.) said voters "don't believe the government can do anything right including give away money." . . . Breakthrough for GOP: It has 17 black candidates running for Congress. . . . The ***Day*** newspaper in New London, Conn., quotes sources saying state's Mashantucket Pequot Indians, who run only gambling casino in New England, were so concerned about GOP gains they were planning making first contribution to Republicans. . . . One possible target of GOP forces in Congress may be anti-smoking crusader FDA chief **David Kessler**, whose agency started silicone-breast-implant scare two years ago. Two large studies released in October confirmed results of earlier but smaller studies showing no tie between connective-tissue disease and implants.

■ '96 presidential speculation already under way. Likely GOP entrant **Jack Kemp** clearly helped himself by racking up IOUs with state GOP parties and drawing heavy coverage in final weeks campaigning for Pataki in N.Y. and **Jeb Bush** in Florida. But did Kemp's opposition (with Empower America colleague **Bill Bennett**) to Proposition 187 in California help or hurt chances? Surprise stand by Kemp and Bennett split conservative columnists. Strongly approving: *New York Times*'s **Bill Safire**, *Wall Street Journal*'s **Paul Gigot**. Strongly critical: *Washington Post*'s **Bob Novak**, *Washington Times*'s **Sam Francis**. . . . Implications for Clinton from camapign were clearly ominous. Rep. **Paul McHale** (D., Pa.) made opposition to Prez on 15 issues a centerpiece of campaign; Sen. **Kent Conrad** (D., N.D.) ran TV ads boasting he voted more often with Minority Leader **Bob Dole** than with Administration.

■ On the cultural front: Now that the University of Massachusetts has named new library after leftist black activist **W. E. B. DuBois**, student **Martin Jones** has written *USA Today* to announce he is withdrawing opposition to campus statue of Minuteman. "I am proud to acknowledge my mistake in criticizing the Minutemen," Jones wrote, acknowledging their "contribution to the establishment of our country." . . . News less encouraging at Virginia's **James Madison University** where student leaders rejected effort to have Pledge of Allegiance recited before student government meetings. "It brings religion into the matter. God is mentioned," explained student senator **Ron Rose**.

"Our mole turned out to be a weasel."

■ **M. Stanton Evans**'s National Journalism Center, which offers media training "within context of traditional values," accepting applications for six-week session starting December 12. Deadline is Dec. 2; Center's address is 800 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C., 20002, or call 202-544-1333; fax 202-544-5368.

■ More trouble for **Daniel Ortega**'s Sandinista Front in Nicaragua. **John Otis** of *Washington Times* reports Ortega power grab has forced out "best and brightest." Moderate editor of party newspaper, **Carlos Foranado Chamorro**, among victims of latest purge. . . . Japanese trade minister **Ryutaro Hashimoto**, a hardliner on trade concessions to U.S., in hot water after saying Japan's aggression in WWII is matter of definition. . . . French Interior Minister **Charles Pasqua** wants a U.S.-style primary so Gaullists **Jacques Chirac** and Premier **Edouard Balladur** don't split vote in presidential election next spring. Ex-President **Valéry Giscard d'Estaing** says multiple candidates on the Right have obstructed three rightist victories since 1958. . . . On recent China trip, U.S. Defense Secretary **William J. Perry** offered to share computer simulation programming to pursuade Chinese government to stop testing weapons. . . . American journalist **Sol Sanders** says intelligence sources expect Russians to settle several million dollars on CIA mole **H. Aldrich Ames**. "Debt of honor" expected to be paid through wife or child living in Colombia. . . . The Galeras volcano in the Colombian Andes is spewing a pound of gold a day, says geologist **Fraser Goff** of Los Alamos National Laboratory.

■ Oh-so-*that's*-it Department: According to two-volume report commissioned by U.S. Postal Service, post office problem is "hostility" between "adversarial" employees and "autocratic" supervisors working in "dysfunctional organizational culture."

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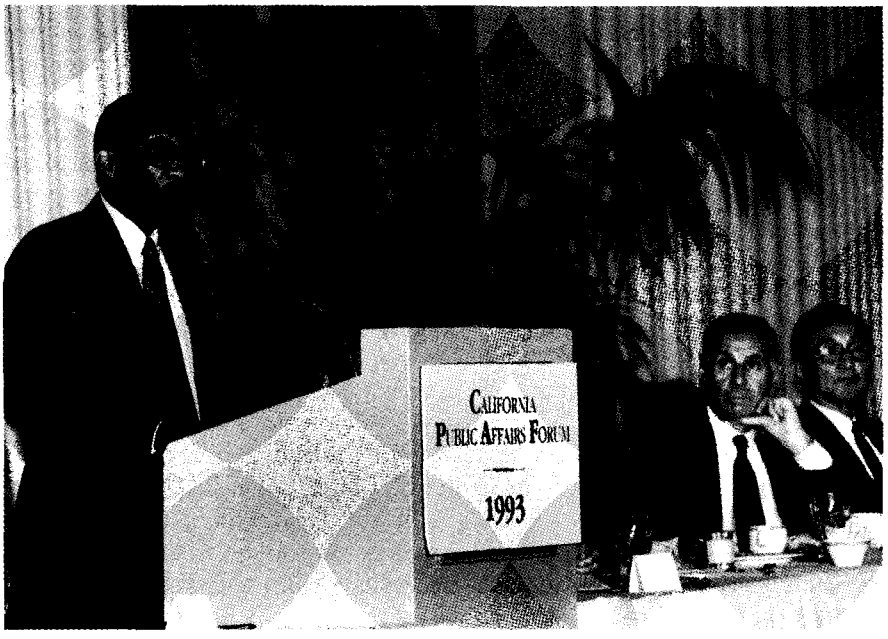
Reshaping Health Care in America



Dr. Walter Broadnax, deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, delivered the keynote address at the 1993 California Public Affairs Forum.

Searching for a Cure

Dismayed by skyrocketing costs and a lack of universal coverage, Americans have made reforming their health care system a top priority. But achieving consensus on a plan of reform is not easy.

That's why the California Public Affairs Forum recently convened a panel of experts to study this issue. The forum is a biennial event sponsored jointly by the California Chamber of Commerce, the Bay Area Council, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and Hitachi, Ltd. Its purpose is to provide a forum for discussion of important issues facing California and the nation. Begun in 1987, the forums have examined state transportation problems, the jobs/housing balance, air quality control, and education reform.

No one on the panel questioned the need for health care reform. "The medical treatment that people in this country get is probably the best in the world. But it costs too much and anywhere from 34 to 37 million of us are not covered," said John Palmer, White House correspondent for Christian Science Monitor radio.

"We have in this country a moral imperative to secure health care for everyone," said Dr. Paul F. Griner, president of the American College of Physicians.

Dr. Griner and the other panelists agree that a national health care system is key to controlling runaway health care costs and eliminating the inequities in the current system. They are optimistic that the U.S. will ultimately adopt such a plan.

Fueling the panel's optimism are signs that many Americans are changing their attitudes about health care. "Health care reform has already begun in this country," said Ms. Julia Thomas, president and CEO of Bobrow / Thomas and Associates, an architectural firm that specializes in health care facilities design. "We've seen a huge move toward managed care, preventive care, and a more educated consumer."

Dr. Paul F. Griner, president of the American College of Physicians

"Health care reform is of great interest to us," said Yoshiro Kuwata, a director of Hitachi. "As an employer of more than 16,000 Americans, we are bound to feel the impact of any change in the nation's health care system."

We at Hitachi share the panel's optimism about the future of health care in the U.S. We are proud to play a role in providing a forum for discussion of issues facing us all.

To obtain copies of the speakers' presentations, please write:
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THE WEEK

■ When few Democrats wanted Bill Clinton to campaign for them, he left the country. The first known case of the sinking ship leaving the rats.

■ *Newsweek* recently reported that Hillary Clinton is, as she puts it, "an old-fashioned Methodist." Recounting her spiritual journey, Mrs. Clinton told *Newsweek* that at Wellesley she read the Methodist magazine, *Motive*; she remembered best "an article by a Methodist theologian, Carl Oglesby," opposing the Vietnam War. Trouble is, Carl Oglesby wasn't a theologian at all, but president of the radical Students for a Democratic Society. Who knows what she mistook for the hymn book.

■ Transportation Secretary Federico Peña last week announced he is charging General Motors with producing millions of defective pickup trucks between 1973 and 1987, notwithstanding a report by his Office of Defects Investigation that other companies' trucks pose equal, and perhaps greater, hazards in collisions. The GM trucks met then existing safety standards for side impact at 20 mph, and they also meet a proposed 45-mph standard. But if hit at 70 mph they do sometimes suffer a fuel-tank rupture and can burn, like anything smaller than an M-1 tank. Secretary Peña's hit on GM is a capitulation to Ralph Nader's Center for Auto Safety, which has been campaigning against GM's pickups for years. Peña's move will almost certainly be thrown out by the courts, but only after millions of dollars' worth of litigation.

■ For reasons of its own, a driverless bulldozer in West Seneca, N.Y., rumbled through a used-car lot and squashed 16 cars. Is the Transportation Department missing a bulldozer?

■ Black ministers in New Jersey urging all decent folk to shun Bob Grant, a fiery radio talk-show host, on the grounds of alleged racism, have signed up one shunner: New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman, who was enthusiastically backed by Mr. Grant during her 1993 campaign. Just one more politician growing in office? Yes, but with an additional layer of motivation. The state's black ministers have to prove themselves in the wake of Ed Rollins's claim (since retracted) that "walking-around money" neutralized the black vote against—yes—Christine Todd Whitman. Mrs. Whitman, who was equally embarrassed by that story, feels under additional pressure not to buck the ministers now. As for Grant, he is an incendiary who makes Rush Limbaugh sound like a harmless little fuzzball. Which puts him in the mainstream of talk radio.

■ In 1992 Representative Susan Molinari (R., N.Y.) outspent her challenger, New York City Councilman Sal Albanese, by almost 2 to 1, beating him by ten percentage points. Mr. Albanese is still mourning his defeat; in fact, he is trying to make a federal case out of it. With the assistance of a young Boston attorney named John Bonifaz, he has filed suit in federal court, challenging what he calls the "wealth primary," the contest for campaign money. Among other things, Mr. Bonifaz argues that private campaign contributions violate the First Amendment by giving some candidates a greater ability to communicate with voters. It's hard to see how Congress's failure to prohibit private campaign contributions amounts to a "law . . . abridging the freedom of speech." Indeed, common sense (not to mention the Supreme Court) suggests that such a prohibition would itself abridge freedom of speech. But Mr. Albanese has a good reason for seeking to turn the First Amendment upside down. "I find it abhorrent to get on the phone with people I barely know to ask them for $500 or $1,000," he told the *New York Times*. "I can't get up the nerve to do it."

■ Vaulting to the top of the Republican National Committee's list of 1996 convention sites: San Francisco and Buffalo.

■ Remember O'Sullivan's Law, which says that any group not explicitly right-wing will become left-wing over time? Well, it may need a codicil. Friends of Citizens Against Government Waste, an explicitly conservative group, worry that even it may be angling for "strange new respect" by shifting leftward. In its new

"Don't be upset. Many dragons your age experience fire-breathing problems from time to time."

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congressional ratings, 125 Republican House members scored below their lifetime averages, while 208 Democrats scored above theirs. Have Republicans suddenly gained an appetite for waste that the Democrats have lost? Not exactly. CAGW—under the leadership of its new president, Tom Shatz, a liberal Democrat—has begun to include in its scoring defense votes that have nothing to do with pork. A vote against a Barney Frank amendment to cut defense by another $2.5 billion, for instance, is rated as a vote for waste. So was a vote to build Trident missiles. In contrast, despite CAGW's promise to Representative Bill Zeliff (R., N.H.), the discharge petition in support of the "A to Z" spending-cut session was *not* included in the ratings.

■ We simply do not understand. Assault rifles were banned by the crime bill. The crime bill passed! Even Republicans voted for it! It was signed into law! Assault weapons are illegal. You cannot have one. Nobody has one. They are all gone. They will never bother the decent citizens of this country again. Crime has ended. We outlawed crime. Nobody could have shot at the White House with an assault weapon. Clinton flacks must have made up the whole incident.

■ Of course, it wasn't an "assault rifle," but a Chinese semi-automatic. That's okay; half the people who supported the crime bill didn't know the difference either.

■ Americans donated an average of $646 to charity last year, down 11 per cent (in real dollars) from 1989. So ends a decade-long rebound in the charitable impulse. The recent shrinkage confounds all the economic models of charitable giving. After all, the economy is strong, the stock market is up, and tax rates, against which donors can still deduct a good chunk of their largesse, are higher. Part of the new niggardliness undoubtedly reflects recent scandals: Nobody wants to donate to the opulent lifestyle of United Way executives. And the economy, we know from the latest report on poverty, is far weaker than GDP data suggest. Perhaps the most powerful explanation, though, is the crowding out of traditional voluntarism—and values—by the renewed emphasis on government social programs. Surely few of us long for the days when the Salvation Army was all that stood between the unemployed and starvation. But the erosion of communal values has consequences not dreamed of by those who once criticized private philanthropy as a reactionary barrier to liberalism.

■ President Clinton took a campaign swing through the Middle East, Michael Barone quipped, because no one wanted him in the Middle West. The strategy seems to have worked, boosting his popularity a few points via upbeat photo opportunities at the Jordan–Israel treaty signing and with the troops in Kuwait. There is some foreign-policy value in showing the flag with U.S. friends in the Middle East, though it's marginal at this point. The diplomatic benefits of Mr. Clinton's visit to Damascus seem marginal too. Syrian President Hafez al-Assad made them even more so by an egregious press-conference performance in which he said with a straight face that Syria never had anything to do with terrorism, and that in any case Mr. Clinton hadn't raised the subject.

■ President Clinton didn't see his meeting with Hafez al-Assad as dealing with a terrorist, he saw it as talking to a future Nobel Peace Prize winner.

■ As details of the nuclear deal with North Korea emerge, our suspicions are validated. Senator John McCain rightly calls it "appeasement." Out of fear of a military confrontation—a fear the Clintonites openly admit—the Administration offered North Korea a series of significant concessions, including an expensive new light-water reactor, diplomatic and economic relations, and postponement of any inspection of the two suspect waste sites that would reveal the extent of North Korea's past manufacture of weapons-grade nuclear fuel. When you deal from weakness, and advertise it, this is what you get.

■ Olivia Newton-John, Yoko Ono, Robert Redford, Carl Sagan, Ted Turner, and other scientific experts on the board of directors have installed former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev as the head of Green Cross International. Mr. Gorbachev is noted for turning Lake Baikal, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Afghanistan, East Germany, and a large area downwind of Chernobyl into ecological showcases. Green Cross seeks "international ecological law" to apply the same techniques worldwide.

■ A few years ago, Lynne Cheney, then head of the NEH, approved a grant for a project to set standards for the teaching of history in American public schools. The document, called *United States History: Exploring the American Experience*, has finally been released, and Mrs. Cheney feels "flimflammed" by the result.

Overextended

With a hand in Haiti
  As a foot extends
(With some difficulty) toward
  Kuwait, while he fends
Kooks in North Korea
  From the DMZ,
Mr. Clinton's left with one
  Knee and elbow free.

W. H. VON DREELE

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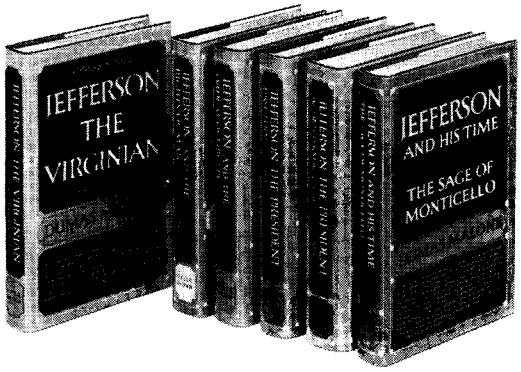

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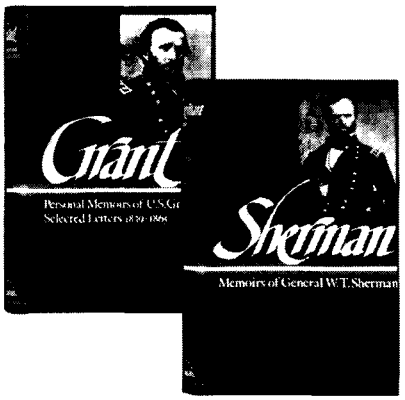

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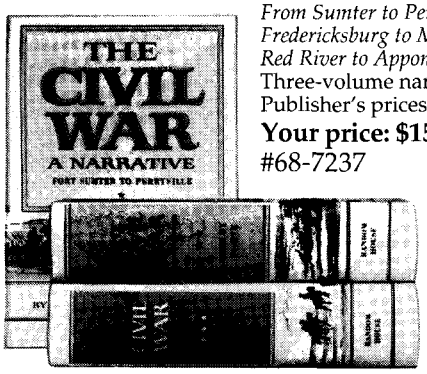

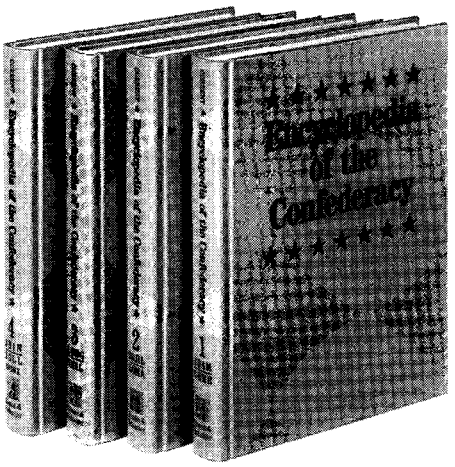

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The essence of the new dispensation may be divined from the number of times certain people and events are mentioned in the study: Paul Revere: 0; the Gettysburg Address: 1; U. S. Grant: 1; Robert E. Lee: 0; Thomas Edison: 0; the Wright Brothers: 0; McCarthyism: 19; Harriet Tubman: 5; Ku Klux Klan: 17. The document breaks off ten eras of American history and provides nifty teaching suggestions for each, such as encouraging students to "construct a dialogue between an Indian leader and George Washington at the end of the [Revolutionary] war," or to think about Aztec "architecture, skills, labor systems, and agriculture"—though not human sacrifice. As Mrs. Cheney has pointed out, surely the Clinton Administration will install these guidelines as part of its Goals 2000 program, significantly altering the substance of what children will learn in the classroom. This illustrates a seldom recognized aspect to the otherwise noble fight for standards, which is that a standard requires a standard-maker. National education bureaucrats are incompetent to perform that task. The best, albeit imperfect, solution is to have standards set at the lowest level practicable—i.e., the states or, better yet, the individual school districts.

■ HUD officials Phyllis Minn and Rick White sent out a departmental memo about something called HOPE VI public education conferences for HUD employees in San Francisco and Boston. Amid the bureaucratese, it stated: "The time frame is also to support Senators Feinstein's and Kennedy's campaigns." Oops! The memo inevitably made its way to the all-seeing "Inside the Beltway" column in the *Washington Times*, and now everybody knows.

■ But then, everybody always did.

■ When it comes to thinking about crime, let no one say the *New York Times* is unable to make sophisticated distinctions. Commenting on the season's negative political advertisements, an editorial denounced GOP ads for giving the grief-stricken relatives of murder victims a chance to criticize the crime-fighting policies of Democrats. "Tawdry," "shameful," "distasteful," cried the editors, who went on to praise a Democratic ad which uses a grief-stricken relative to criticize Republicans. The *Times* makes an equally fine distinction when it comes to reporting on perpetrators of violent crime. As Hilton Kramer observes in the *New York Post*, the *Times* seems to have adopted a policy of specifying a criminal's race only if he isn't black. So last month, when a man, mortally shot in a lonely park, staggered up to somebody to say, "I've been shot by a black man," a reporter from the *Times* recorded only that he "said he had been shot." If a black Republican ever goes on a killing spree, the resulting cognitive dissonance could keep the paper's top editors in conference for days.

■ A study recently published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* found that women who undergo abortions are 50 per cent more likely to get breast cancer than women who miscarry or give birth. This finding is touchy stuff, and the major newspapers handled it with care. "Caution urged on abortion, cancer finding," *USA Today*'s headline announced. *USA Today*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post* noted that the risk increase is so small that it is difficult to establish a cause-and-effect relationship. They reported that the observed difference could be due to confounding variables, recall bias, or other limitations in the case-control design of the study. *USA Today*, the *Times*, and the Associated Press noted that even if the abortion hazard is real, it amounts to a small increase in a tiny risk. These caveats were perfectly appropriate. But they apply with equal force to studies of the link between secondhand smoke and various diseases, an area where the mainstream press has displayed almost no skepticism. Add to this the fact that journalists tend to support abortion rights and disapprove of smoking, and you have a plausible hypothesis, if not proof of a cause-and-effect relationship.

■ Hillary was reportedly seen this week, in some foreign country, but there were also sightings of D. B. Cooper and Elvis, so who knows?

■ Academic feminists won't admit it, but when women think for themselves, they often dissent from the doctrines of academic feminism. Some recent notable dissents: The Susan B. Anthony List (a counterweight to the leftist Emily's List) raises money for pro-life women candidates. A small publication called *The Women's Quarterly* bills itself as "a lively forum for women's writing—that is, women's writing with small *w*'s and 'women' spelt as it is in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, not 'wimmin' or 'wymyn.'" And the Women's Freedom Network, founded last year by sociologist Rita Simon and writer Cathy Young, held its first national conference in Washington, D.C., titled "Reclaiming Feminism." With speakers as diverse as *Reason*'s Virginia Postrel, *Playboy*'s Asa Baber, Professor Christina Hoff Sommers (author of *Who Stole Feminism?*), and the ACLU's Nadine Strossen, the conference presented an odd mixture. But it also represented the view that women are not victims, that feminism deserves to be free of orthodoxy, and that men are people too—shocking propositions to observers of contemporary feminism.

■ Last year, the Campaign for Human Development, the U.S. Catholic bishops' "poverty-fighting" program, was caught funding a blatantly pro-abortion organization (see *NR*, December 13, 1993). It has since gone and sinned some more. The October issue of the Capital Research Center's *Organization Trends* reports that this year the CHD gave $50,000 to two

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Maine and Massachusetts groups lobbying Congress to adopt a Canadian-style health-care system, which among other things mandates abortion coverage. The CHD also continued to bankroll some of the nation's most notorious radical groups. One example: 14 affiliates of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (a/k/a ACORN), founded by Saul Alinsky, received $436,000 in CHD grants (one for a project to "organize unemployed workers and wage campaigns on a national level to win laws and agreements that require employers to hire the unemployed"). Catholic parishioners contribute generously ($13 million in 1993) to the Campaign's annual pre-Thanksgiving collection. Maybe this November, Catholics will choose instead to give to charitable organizations that can be trusted to spend their money on behalf of, and not in opposition to, the Church's teachings. Let us pray that the CHD will take any fall-off in contributions as a sign that it should change its wayward practices.

Right Data

Banking on Racism

ARE Minorities held to higher credit standards than whites? Federal regulators certainly think so. Their "evidence" comes from a widely publicized—and fatally flawed—study of three thousand mortgage applications conducted by the Boston Fed in 1992.

The Fed found that rejection rates for minority applicants were much higher than for whites: 28 per cent versus 10 per cent. No surprise there, since white applicants also had higher incomes, better credit histories, and lower appraisal/loan ratios. A close look at the raw data shows, if anything, signs of reverse discrimination:

WHERE'S THE BIAS?: FINANCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF MORTGAGE APPLICANTS

	Approved		Denied	
	White	Black	White	Black
Debt Payment/Income (%)	33.0	34.0	37.0	38.0
Net Worth ($)	93,000	39,000	75,000	33,000
Monthly Income ($)	4,666	3,333	4,471	3,600
% with Poor Credit History	14.6	23.4	38.9	51.5
% Self-Employed	12.0	7.5	22.4	7.4

Source: Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

Old-fashioned discrimination, where clearly qualified black applicants are rejected—and unqualified whites accepted—is nowhere to be seen. Even subtle discrimination seems unlikely, given that blacks and whites receiving mortgages defaulted on them at the same rates. If bankers had rejected a larger percentage of equally qualified blacks, the black default rate would be lower than that of whites.

Yet according to the statistical equation developed by the Boston Fed, marginal black applicants were 60 per cent more likely to be rejected for mortgages than whites with comparable financial characteristics. To the "discrimination police" this was a veritable smoking gun. Broad new federal requirements for lending to minorities were initiated shortly afterward.

But earlier this year David Horne, an economist with the FDIC, took another look at the Boston study. You don't have to be a statistician to appreciate the absurdities Mr. Horne uncovered:

—Five rejected minority applicants had sought special low-income loans for which they were clearly not qualified. Several had incomes of over $7,000 per month. They were rejected precisely because they could have easily procured a conventional mortgage.

—The Boston Fed based its conclusions on data in preliminary mortgage applications rather than the final, verified version lenders require for approval. Creditworthiness of rejected applicants is often overstated in the initial application.

—Eight allegedly rejected applications were, in fact, withdrawn when buyers decided not to purchase the property. Six other applicants refused the bank's counteroffer.

—Neither gifts nor home equity was included among the financial variables used to predict whether an applicant would be approved for a mortgage. Since whites are far more likely than minorities to finance homes with these items, their omission created an unwarranted appearance of discrimination by lending institutions.

More generally, FDIC examiners found data errors in 57 per cent of the instances where an application had been "unfairly denied" according to the Boston Fed. Some were wildly off, like the $3,115,000 loan supposedly approved for a $445,000 house (the actual loan was for $311,500), and the $55,000 loan allegedly procured by a person with net worth of minus $7.9 million. These both involved whites, further biasing the Fed's conclusions.

Do government regulators care about flawed statistics? Probably not. Many banks have already imposed minority lending quotas on themselves, hoping to avoid further regulation or litigation. The big losers, ultimately, will be creditworthy borrowers of all races.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

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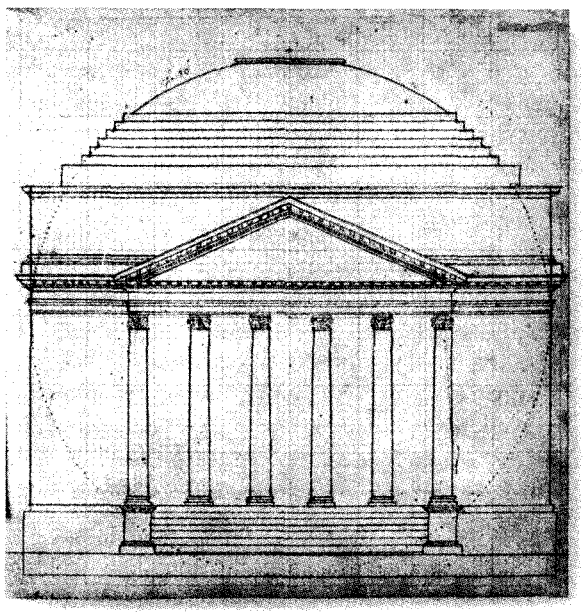
THOMAS JEFFERSON WISHED TO BE REMEMBERED MORE FOR THE FOUNDING OF A COLLEGE THAN THE FATHERING OF A COUNTRY.

On August 30, 1995, a country won't be founded, but a new college will. The Honors College at Adelphi in Garden City, 45 minutes from New York City. Its aim, like Jefferson's 200 years ago, is to prepare the next generation of leaders in government, science, the arts, the professions and business.



Jefferson's design for the library at the University of Virginia, circa 1817

Despite the portrayal of today's generation as subjects of circumstance rather than makers of history, we take an optimistic view. We have established the Honors College to ensure our students know they can be the best.

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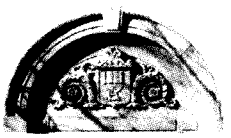
Qualities that can only give our Honors College students, and with them our nation, a very good shot at life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness in the 21st century.



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■ From the *Daily Telegraph* (London): "A vicar has been asked to explain to his bishop his unorthodox actions during a cricket-club dinner at which he threw roast potatoes across the room. The Rev. Richard Allen, called on to make an after-dinner speech, began by hurling a bunch of flowers. He followed up by asking if any of the guests picked their noses. Then he invited players to practice their catching as he threw the roast potatoes. . . . A cricket-club committee member said: 'Everyone was buying him drinks before the dinner. It was obvious that by the time we sat down he was a bit under the weather. . . . It isn't the sort of behavior you expect of a vicar.'" The Republican Party has approached Dr. Allen to run for mayor of Chicago.

■ Telling her stunned bishop that she had seen it on a magazine cover and simply had to have it, a bride in Italy wore a 500-pound wedding dress that had to be held up by a 13-foot iron framework.

Autumn of Our Discontent

THE famous line from *Network* is often adapted as the perfect expression of the public's mood: "They're mad as hell and they're not going to take it any more!" But what exactly is "it"? The wave of public anger goes much deeper than contempt for a bantamweight President or a risible Congress; it's more a skepticism about whatever happens in "Washington," which has become a catchword for all those forces outside the control of the individual or his community. Asked about themselves, Americans remain a cheery lot. On the Wirthlin Group's "ladder of life" question, which asks people to rate the quality of their lives on a scale of 0 to 10, Americans rated their lives at 5.6 five years ago, 6.4 now, and expect to be at 7.7 five years from now. But the optimism melts as soon as people are asked to think of America collectively. Fifty-five per cent see "difficulty" instead of "prosperity" ahead for the U.S. in 1995, despite the rosy predictions of economists. And in early September as many as 7 out of 10 Americans said the country was on the wrong track.

The deepest source of the collective pessimism is America's perceived moral breakdown. Eighty-four per cent say they have old-fashioned values about family and marriage, and 76 per cent agree that the United States is in moral and spiritual decline. And 80 per cent cite that decline as the reason for their dissatisfaction with the nation's course. On top of that is a continuing erosion of faith in the nation's institutions of government. Wirthlin finds that 76 per cent of Americans think the U.S. Government is run "by a few big interests" rather than "for the benefit of all." Fifty-five per cent agree that "the government as now organized and operated . . . is hopelessly incapable of dealing with all the crucial problems facing the country." *Hopelessly* incapable.

The two public-opinion trends—dimming views of both the nation's morals and its government—sometimes intersect. There is strong public support for self-reliance (88 per cent of Americans admire people who get rich by working hard) and simultaneous belief that government undermines it—85 per cent, according to Times Mirror, think poor people have become too dependent on government assistance programs (46 per cent completely agree, up 11 points from just two years ago). This coincides with a steep drop in support for social-welfare programs; only 57 per cent of Americans—down from 71 per cent in 1987—think it is the responsibility of government to take care of people who can't take care of themselves.

What then, finally, do Americans want? It's pretty clear—despite some of the poll numbers—that it isn't a Ludwig von Mises dream world. (Sorry.) There is enduring public support for specific government programs that are perceived as working well (Social Security, Medicare) and for certain social-welfare goals (remember the broad support for universal coverage?). Yet 69 per cent of Americans think that the Federal Government controls too much of our daily lives. What the public seems, on balance, to crave is for Washington to slim down, for the power to come back to them and their communities, where they can go about mending the rents in the social fabric through whatever community or personal action they judge best.

So far Republicans have done a fine job at riding the anti-federalist wave, tapping nicely into its anti-Clinton aspects. But if they're not to be swallowed by it too—after all, more of them will now be federal officeholders—they will have to lead rather than just follow. More Republicans will have to pick up on the sort of "radical" ideas for governmental restructuring that, say, Lamar Alexander, formerly a nine-iron country-clubber, is taking around the country. To concentrate the GOP's mind, here is one last public-opinion datum: 53 per cent of Americans favor the idea of third major political party.

Pataki for Governor

THE atmosphere of the New York Republican Party in the homestretch of the election campaign resembles that of a Renaissance court, with assorted would-be favorites, all carrying copies of *The Prince* in their doublets, countermining and dissing each other.

The most spectacular maneuver was executed by New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani when he crossed party lines to endorse Mario Cuomo over George Pataki—"giving artificial respiration," as Bill Buckley put it, "to a political corpse far gone in decomposition"—on the

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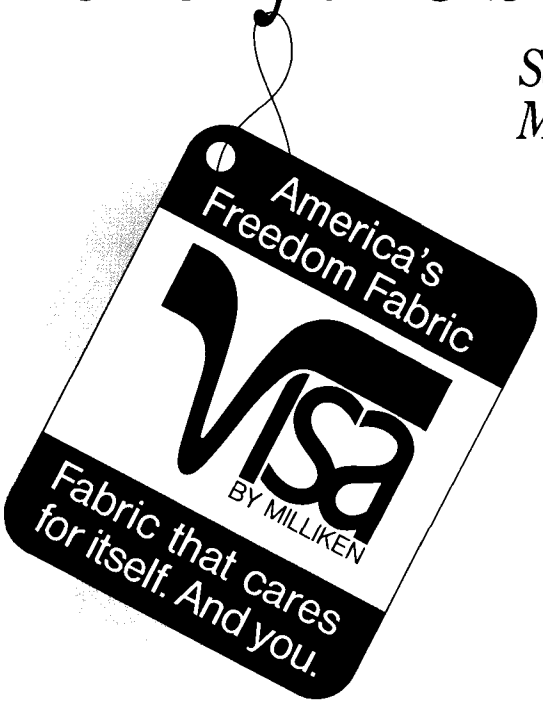

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grounds that the corpse would aid the city more generously. In so doing, Mayor Giuliani jettisoned one of the chief rationales for his own campaign last year. By pinning the city's hopes on government largesse rather than on reformist tax policies, he embraced the timid, static analysis of former Mayor David Dinkins. If Giuliani is right now, Dinkins was right then; so why should Giuliani be mayor? Mr. Giuliani also dimmed his future in Republican politics at the state or national level. Instead of urging conservative Democrats to join the Republican coalition—the strategy of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan—he broke Republican ranks to bolster a liberal Democrat. If Giuliani ever addresses a national convention, it will be at three o'clock on a Monday afternoon.

While Rudy Giuliani wielded his stiletto, Herb London, candidate for comptroller, attacked the Republican standard-bearer with a rusty pike. London publicly blamed Pataki for running an issueless campaign, and called on him to show some leadership. London, whom *NR* has supported in several previous runs for office, rightly resented the manner in which Pataki's nomination was rammed through this year's state convention. Moreover, his diagnosis of the Pataki campaign is substantially correct. But running on a party ticket is like entering a bourgeois marriage: one doesn't say certain things in front of the children or the servants. Mr. London should make his complaints in campaign pow-wows, or leak them to friendly journalists—not issue them as press releases.

Conservatives have several bones to pick with George Pataki: his switch from a pro-life to a pro-abortion stance; his nerveless campaign; his relationship with Senator Alfonse D'Amato, which has recalled Trilby's with Svengali. But the choice for voters is clear. Mario Cuomo is a retread of a retread: an echo of his mid-Eighties persona, which was itself an echo of the New Deal. Mr. Pataki is at least aware of the importance of cutting taxes. As a state legislator, he was one of the few who bucked the bipartisan establishment on spending. As governor, he would become his own man, rather than Senator D'Amato's, if for no other reason than self-interest.

Vote for Pataki; annoy Giuliani.

GOP, By Invitation Only

NEW YORK is not the only scene of Republican Party backstabbings. In California, Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan (R.) endorsed Senator Dianne Feinstein (D.); in Pennsylvania, the widow of Senator John Heinz (R.) attacked senatorial candidate Rick Santorum (R.); and in Virginia, former-everything Elliot Richardson (R.) backed Senator Charles Robb (D.) over Oliver North (R.), thus logically completing the work of Senator John Warner (R.), who first encouraged former State Attorney General Marshall Coleman (R.) to run as an independent. Mr. Richardson, still fresh from that labor, announced the formation of Action, Not Gridlock!, a group devoted to enabling "majorities . . . to act on legislation to address our nation's challenges," and transparently stimulated by the success of Senator Bob Dole (R.) in rallying Senate R's to block Bill Clinton's initiatives.

Some of these partisan betrayals are the result of personal rivalries and ambitions, and of local politics. But the double re-appearance of Elliot Richardson suggests another thread: the resistance of the Republican establishment to newcomers. Ollie North is the archetypal outsider, running a populist crusade. Rick Santorum is a Reaganite, updated for 1994. Bob Dole is as old as the hills, but his behavior as minority leader under President Clinton has been responsive to the conservative energies of the party, newly released after four years of George Bush. The old guard would prefer a Bush-type GOP—small, polite, and unsuccessful—because they could continue to run it. One of the signs of a growing party is the cries of those who are being displaced. If you want to see who they are in the GOP, check whose mouths are open.

Tough Proposition

THERE could be no clearer indication of a national death-wish than to combine accepting the loss of control over our borders with an unwillingness to stop subsidizing those who come here illegally. That this situation should ever have developed is a disgrace to the entire U.S. political establishment—including, alas, some of our libertarian and supply-side friends. California's Proposition 187 is the two-by-four needed to get the political establishment's attention.

Two specious arguments about Proposition 187 should be noted. First, opponents of 187 say illegal immigrants are already ineligible for welfare. Of course,

Giuliani Meets Dante

He won't be, like the Black Prince, sent
To rings for the impenitent,
Nor will he sweat with those in for
Sins one associates with gore;
But on some outer ring where guys
Switched wallets, wives, or party ties,
He'll (I'm just guessing) mutter, "Phew!"
And maybe chat with Lindsay, too.

W. H. VON DREELE

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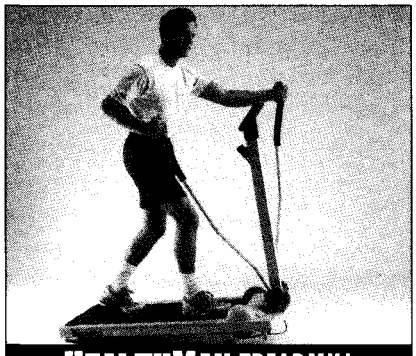

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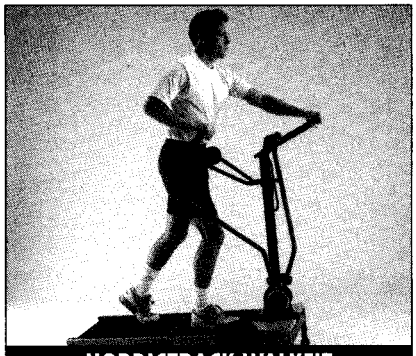

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3	Total-Body Muscular and Cardiovascular Workout	YES Works upper and lower body for most effective total-body workout. Ordinary treadmills only work lower body.	YES **BUT...**Why would you pay $300 more than HEALTHMAX TREADMILL?
4	Full 44" Tread Length	YES Long tread designed for running *and* walking.	NO Shorter 41½" tread limits stride length machine can accommodate.
5	7 Incline Positions	YES 7 different tread incline angles give a full range of workout intensity.	NO Only 6 incline positions — why would you pay $300 more?
6	Variable Resistance on Arm Exercise Poles and Tread	YES Adjusts to your personal resistance level with a simple twist of a dial. Arm pole resistance is 2-way — push *and* pull — for maximum workout.	YES **BUT...**WalkFit costs almost *twice as much* as HEALTHMAX!
7	Electronic Workout Monitor	YES 7-function monitor tracks your workout progress.	YES **BUT...** Are you sure you want to spend $300 more than HEALTHMAX TREADMILL?
8	Pulse Monitor Included	YES Monitors your heart rate for optimum — and safe — workout.	NO Not included. To get one, you must pay an extra $149.95 for their optional "workout computer."
9	Folds for Easy Storage	YES Easily folds to just 53" long by 21" wide by only 11" high!	YES **BUT...**When folded, it's still 53" long by 24" wide by a cumbersome 18" high.
10	Comes Virtually Fully Assembled	YES Simply attach monitor and 3 knobs, and you're ready to go!	NO Requires more extensive assembly.
11	Payable in Installments	YES 8 easy credit card installments of just $37.38! ($59 shipping/handling added to first installment.)	YES **BUT...**You start by paying $169.90, then you must pay $39.95 per month for 12 months, then a final $34.54! (includes 12% interest)

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this argument conveniently ignores their American-born children, automatically citizens through a debatable reading of the Fourteenth Amendment, and therefore the agents by which their parents get AFDC. But more widely, the argument ignores the collapse of welfare eligibility enforcement, over which both Republicans and Democrats have presided. Thus it is technically a deportable offense for *legal* immigrants to accept welfare in their first five years here. Yet the 1990 Census data showed that 8.8 per cent of immigrants who had arrived in the previous five years legal and illegal together, were on welfare, as opposed to maybe 5 per cent of American whites.

Secondly, opponents of Proposition 187 claim it is "unconstitutional." And indeed, there can be no doubt that any effort by Americans to regain control of their country will be opposed, fanatically, by entrenched liberal judges. For example, Judge Steven Reinhardt of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has recently authored an opinion overturning the deportation of a Nigerian illegal immigrant on the grounds that for the INS to investigate him because of his "foreign-sounding" name was unfair. Since illegal immigrants are overwhelmingly from a handful of national groups, this ruling would cripple any common-sense deportation effort. But foolish judicial fiats can be overturned by statute—or by constitutional amendment.

There *is* an ugly side to the Proposition 187 campaign—but it is an ugliness scanted by the massively anti-187 media. The measure's sponsors have received death threats, facilitated by the *Los Angeles Times*' helpful reporting of where they live. Drivers with pro-187 bumper stickers have been harassed. And there has been an avalanche of money against 187 not simply from the usual suspects like the National Education Association, but also from Mexican business groups linked to the Mexican government. All this, and high-minded lectures on the dangers of "nativism" from establishment politicians of both parties. As we go to press, Californians are still resisting an extraordinary establishment effort to browbeat them. But if Proposition 187 does fail, the issue will simply flare up again, and again, as the American nation resists its own dissolution.

A New Black Caucus?

"I AM DIVORCING myself from the Democratic Party on grounds of mental cruelty, abandonment, and lack of support," said black businessman Van Deward Woods, president of the popular Harlem restaurant Sylvia's, as he defected to the Republican Party and endorsed Herb London's candidacy for New York State comptroller in front of 150 cheering black businessmen.

Indeed, one of the little-noticed developments in this year's election is the steady rise of black Republican candidates and voters. Running for Congress are former football stars J. C. Watts in Oklahoma and Ron Freeman in Missouri, businesswoman Jo Baylor in Texas, and lawyer and minister Bill Jordan in Mississippi. In Massachusetts, Ralph C. Martin II was handpicked by Governor William Weld as the first-ever black candidate for district attorney in Suffolk County. In Ohio, Governor George Voinovich pushed Ken Blackwell to run for state treasurer. These black candidates have been drawn to the GOP by its call for entrepreneurial opportunity, personal responsibility, and traditional family values.

Should the black congressional candidates win, they will join Connecticut Representative Gary Franks in the House Black Caucus. Trouble is, Mr. Franks is always forced to leave Caucus meetings after lunch, when policy is discussed, since he does not subscribe to the group's monolithic liberalism. However, should the *Republican* Black Caucus grow from one to five, they can have their own weekly luncheon meeting, perhaps at Sylvia's, in the heart of the new Harlem.

Bosnian Bog

AT THE end of October, the Muslim-led government of Bosnia launched a major counteroffensive against the Serbs, whose aggression the West purports to deplore. Its forces regained a hundred square miles of territory to the northwest and southwest of the capital, Sarajevo. Somehow the Bosnians had managed to obtain weapons to defend themselves, despite the United Nations embargo on weapons for either side, which has served mainly to disarm the weaker Bosnians. As the Clinton Administration continues to renege on its many public pledges to lift the embargo, the Bosnians have shown a courage that puts the West to shame.

The premise of Britain's Foreign Office and France's Quai d'Orsay has been that the Bosnian Muslims

California's King Kong

With Kemp and Bennett screaming
  Like Fay Wray in the ape's
Adoring digits, Wilson
  Cut all Kathleen's escapes
By calling California
  An immigration dump,
Which set the lady up for
  A stomach-churning slump.

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Credit Card No. _____ Exp. Date

Name _____
(Please print clearly.)

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City/State/Zip _____

Signature _____
(All orders subject to acceptance.)

☐ I prefer not to use a credit card and will pay by check. Enclosed is my check for $259, plus $9.50 shipping/handling, a total of $268.50* for each jacket.

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could never win—and, indeed, should not be permitted to try. At one level, this attitude is based on a pious but cynical notion that the quickest way to end the fighting is for the weaker side to capitulate. (From the wonderful folks who brought you Munich.) At a deeper level, it may be an atavistic aversion to a Muslim state on European soil, the same attitude that has led the European Union to treat loyal NATO ally Turkey as an untouchable in recent decades.

The cynical pieties of the British and French diplomats were unmasked when their military colleagues on the ground, ostensibly acting in the name of the UN, reacted to the Bosnian counteroffensive by denouncing it. Lieutenant General Bertrand de Lapresle declared that the Serbs would never make peace unless the world community showed more sympathy and understanding for their position. This, after the Muslims had accepted and the Serbs rejected the latest peace plan by the Contact Group of the major powers. Lapresle minimized reports of Serb violations of weapons-exclusion zones around Sarajevo, despite several days of Serb shelling of its suburbs.

The commanders' behavior is an argument for removing the UN forces, which have become a military and diplomatic shield for the Serb aggressors. If, in addition, the arms embargo were lifted from the Muslim defenders, the result might be diplomacy that was truly fruitful.

President Clinton wrote to Senator Sam Nunn on August 10 promising that, if the Serbs continued to reject the peace plan, the Administration would introduce a resolution in the UN Security Council to lift the embargo. It finally did so "informally" last week. Not clear, however, is the Administration's subsequent course if the Security Council refuses to go along with the American resolution. The expectation is that nothing will happen for several months. Hence the beleaguered Bosnians' valiant efforts in recent weeks to do what they can on their own.

Solzhenitsyn: Still Telling the Truth

ALEKSANDR SOLZHENITSYN will be remembered as one of the prophetic voices of the twentieth century. Even if the world is covered over with concrete, he memorably said, echoing Ilya Ehrenburg, a blade of grass will grow through a crack. The blade of grass did grow, into a revolution of freedom. Yet last week Solzhenitsyn felt he had to address the Russian parliament. His blade of grass had become a weedy tangle. He was greeted with boredom by the parliamentarians, and largely ignored by the world press.

As usual, however, Solzhenitsyn was worth hearing. "We have moved out of Communism in the most distorted, most absurd, most painful way. What kind of state system do we have today? It's not democracy. Let us admit that it is oligarchy . . . the power of a restricted group of individuals."

When the old Soviet regime was forced by Solzhenitsyn's eminence to send him into exile, he—first in Paris and then throughout the civilized world—destroyed what was left of the moral authority of Communism. His *Gulag Archipelago* was a literary and moral masterpiece. He and his wife had memorized the names of the prisoners, *zeks*, in Soviet prison camps, refusing to let them remain anonymous. Solzhenitsyn spoke with overwhelming moral authority. He was like Walt Whitman's man who "suffered" and was "there," like Elie Wiesel on Hitler's death camps.

Today he remains an Isaiah. His testimony about Russian oligarchic corruption is searing, powerful. He can be ignored, for a while, but never silenced.

More Tricks, Fewer Treats

THREE-FOOT-TALL witches, bags of M&Ms, fallen leaves, here and there a soaped window: these are the traditional images of Halloween in the United States. But more and more in recent years, the revelers have been adults, and the revelry has taken on an increasingly—and perversely—hedonistic character.

All Hallows' Eve was originally a Christian transformation of pagan rituals designed to appease the dead. For this reason, Christians of a strict puritanical stripe have tended to dislike the holiday. The older and more widespread Christian response was always to turn a devil into a joke. From the churches, the holiday seeped into the general culture of Europe and the Americas.

Now Halloween is shedding its playful medieval wrappings. The changing character of the holiday is partly a response to a low-level revival of paganism in the culture, often disguised in New Age trappings. It is partly the result of a homosexual appropriation of October 31—disguise and role-changing being of obvious interest to gays. Mainly, it's an excuse for grown-ups to get drunk and raise hell. Considering the origins of Halloween, they should be careful, lest they succeed.

Notes & Asides

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Since you had already sent me $25 for your 1994 decal [on the yawl] *Patito* and the attached form was sent for signature only, I have to reject your attempt to

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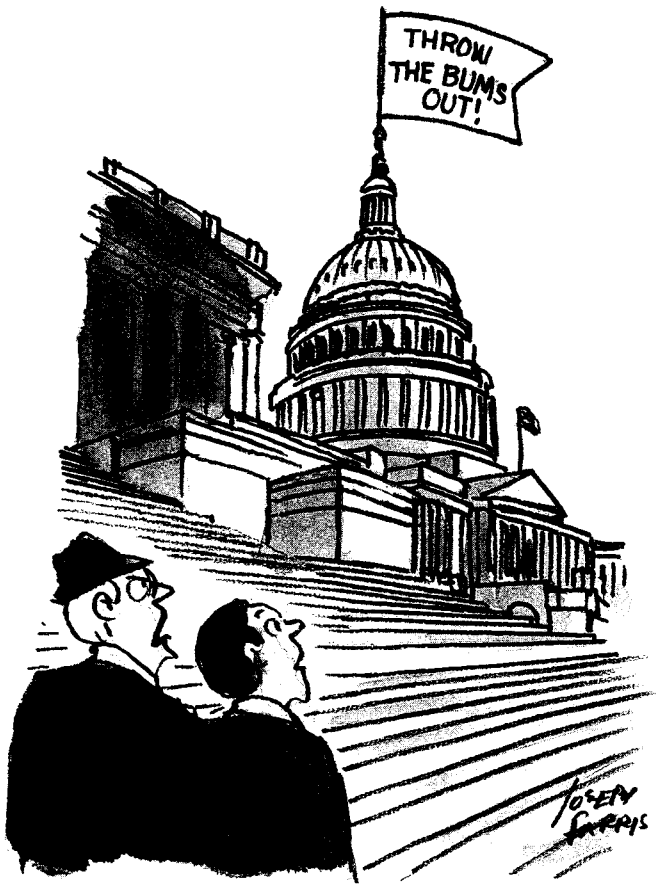

"Find out who's responsible for that!"

reduce the National Debt and hereby return your check #20358.

It was a pleasure serving you and once again welcome home.

Bob Healy
U.S. Customs
Atlanta, Ga.

Dear Mr. Healy: Well now, it is a pleasure to have a check returned from a branch of government. And thank you for your hospitality. Cordially, **WFB**

■ To the Editor
Washington Post

Sirs:

Michael Lind writes ["Calling All Crackpots: A New Conservative Credo: No Enemies on the Right," Oct. 16] that "not one of today's timid conservative intellectuals has dared to mock [Pat] Robertson, the powerful leader of the Christian Coalition. Wm. F. Buckley Jr., who drove Birch leader Robert Welch from the ranks of the respectable right, has repeatedly defended Robertson, even though the latter's claim that a 'tightly knit cabal' of Satan-worshipping occultists is secretly running the United States through the Council on Foreign Relations makes Bircher conspiracy theories look tame."

Mr. Lind would have done better to proclaim my ignorance, than my cowardice. You see, I (along with William Bennett and Midge Decter, also cited by Mr. Lind) have gone no further than to defend many of Pat Robertson's public positions on what ails U.S. policy. Mr. Lind makes it sound as though Mr. Robertson's theory about the Satanists who run U.S. foreign policy were as broadly identified with Robertson as Copernican astronomy is with Galileo. Well, if Pat Robertson indeed believes that crazy stuff, I here and now expel him from the conservative movement, and await a Silver Star for courage from Mr. Lind. To be sure, having flaunted my ignorance, I should make the further admission that I have not personally looked into the recent activities of Satan-worshipping occultists, and should I at some point in the future discover that they are indeed responsible for American foreign policy, a lot of things begin to fall into place, sort of like the centrality of the sun, if you see what I mean.

Yours faithfully,
Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

■ Dear Sir:

Re *Getting Back to the Piano* (*NR*, June 13, p. 53), I am not one of the 300,000 pianists you tested your new notation system upon; but having read music and played the piano for over fifty years, I find your full-page advertisement more satire than syllabus.

For instance, your course is for persons "Who would rather practice a pretty melody than repetitive scales and exercises."

Sergei V. Rachmaninoff, Joseph Lhevinne, Ignace Jan Paderewski—to name a few prominent worldwide concert pianists—all stated for publication the essentialness of scales and exercises.

Mr. Cristofori's invention won't be 300 years old until 2009, and our standard system of two-stave notation for it evolved after 15 centuries of trial and error. If you have superseded Scarlatti's Neapolitan System for only $15.95 plus $3.50 P&H, then I shall be happy to retire as a full-time piano teacher and refer unbalanced-budget-weary Americans to you for instruction.

As you are aware, former President Reagan has taken up the harmonica in retirement. I offered piano lessons to George Bush in January 1993 before he left the White House for College Station, Texas, and received no reply. You should call him up.

E. N. Rutherford
Rutherford Piano Studio
Bryan, Tex.

Dear Miss Rutherford: No, no, I never said scales can be scorned, and never said students of my fingering and note-innovation can scale such heights as you have in mind. Just trying to make things a little easier. Cordially, **—WFB**

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ON THE SCENE

Going Negative

RICH LOWRY

Konstantin Vlaov

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WATCHING local TV in Raleigh, North Carolina, you learned two things about David Funderburk in recent weeks: "He doesn't pay his bills," and he has attacked the Rev. Billy Graham. The scofflaw with a mean streak is the Republican nominee for Congress in North Carolina's 2nd District. As election day loomed, he felt the brunt of the Democrats' survival strategy: spend and distort.

The unpaid-bills charge refers to a financial tangle from Funderburk's failed 1986 Senate campaign. The Funderburk for Senate organization and the people who actually ran his campaign are still locked in a complicated argument over who owes whom money. But all debts to outside vendors—pollsters, printers, etc.—have been settled. As for the criticisms of Billy Graham, Funderburk made them when he was ambassador to Rumania in the 1980s and worried (justifiably) that Graham's trips to Eastern Europe would make good propaganda for the Communists. Needless to say, the nuances are left out of his opponent's ads.

Which left Funderburk with the uncomfortable choice of responding to the ads at the expense of his issues message (taxes, crime, congressional reform) or letting the charges stand. "If you had a million dollars the way he does," Funderburk said of his opponent, Richard Moore, "you could both respond to every wild charge and get your message out." Funderburk didn't. Moore had roughly a $100,000 edge in fundraising, according to the latest FEC report, and an ample family fortune sitting behind that.

Well-financed negative campaigns are a decidedly bi-partisan affair, of course (cf. Michael Huffington and Oliver North), but they've had a special significance for Democrats this year. The Democrats' issues are almost non-existent, their President is anathema, and even the "bring home the bacon" message of old has lost some of its resonance. "There's no rationale for candidacy," says Republican National Committee spokesman Chuck Greener. "You don't hear Democrats offering what they intend to do for the next two years. Or why it's so important to have another Democratic vote in Congress."

When Democrats did choose to run positive, issue-oriented ads this year, they often found themselves awkwardly mimicking Republican positions. Democratic Senator Kent Conrad (N.D.) ran TV spots bragging that he voted with Minority Leader Bob Dole more than with President Bill Clinton. Apart from disloyalty, this had the additional demerit of being untrue; Conrad sided with Clinton on 83 per cent of the votes in the 103rd Congress.

So the Democrats' best weapon was the smear—backed, especially when the Democrat was an incumbent, by big bucks. If Democrats hold on to their congressional majorities this year (this page goes to press a week before the election), it is to this combination that they will owe their survival.

Senator Jim Sasser (D., Tenn.) provides a nice snapshot of the Democratic disarray. At first, Sasser was positive. Early in his campaign he ran a (now famous) ad touting his support for voluntary school prayer. (Never mind that for the 18-year Senate veteran school prayer has ranked as an issue somewhere near foreign aid for Freedonia.) But later, Sasser got personal. A radio ad attacked opponent Bill Frist, a doctor, for medical experiments: "after [Frist] got the cats home, he would take them to his lab and perform experiments on them, experiments that killed the cats." Finally, Sasser was dishonest. One TV spot flashed across the screen: "Frist's pledge: Cut Medicare by $124 billion."

That charge has a complicated genealogy. It refers to the Senate version of the "Contract with America," which itself says nothing about Medicare cuts. But in the accompanying cost analysis there is tortured language about possible "entitlement reform" that would achieve savings equal to all Clinton proposals to reduce "non–Social Security" entitlements. Since the Clinton health plan envisioned Medicare cuts of $124 billion, Sasser pinned the number on Frist. In other words, he attacked Frist for a *Clinton* proposal.

The "Contract with America" provided fodder for similar attacks across the country; about forty Democratic campaigns had cut anti-Contract ads by the campaign's final weeks. In Nebraska, three-term congressman Peter Hoagland ran a TV ad against his Republican challenger, Jon Christensen, featuring a Social Security card breaking in half and an elderly woman sitting at a kitchen table, her medication and a cup of coffee in front of her. The script read, in part: "Christensen backs a plan to cut Social Security and Medicare right now. Jon Christensen. He's a radical right extremist. And he's dangerous on Social Security."

Other Democrats were more specific. House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt (Mo.) hit his opponent, Gary Gill, for allegedly supporting a $158-a-month cut in Social Security checks. Yet the Contract contains no specific spending cuts. It does have a Balanced Budget

Mr. Lowry is NR*'s national political reporter.*

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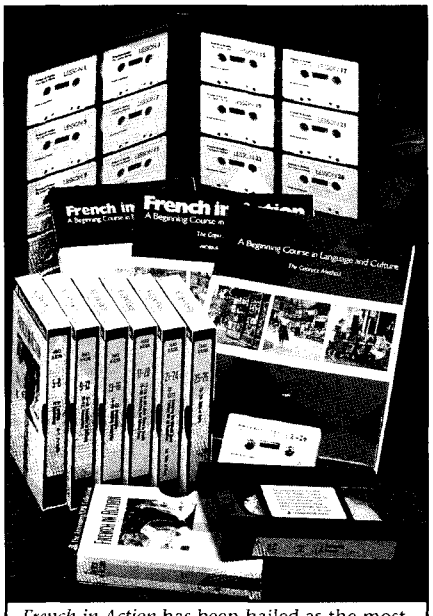

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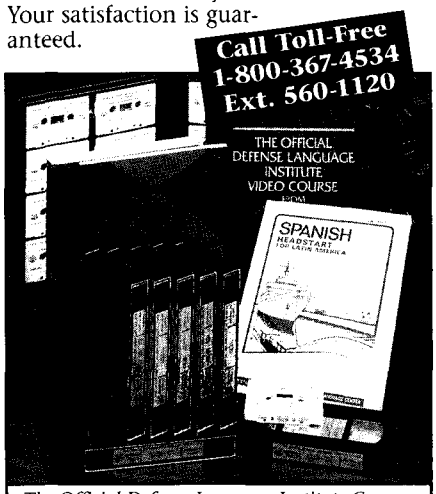

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Amendment, which would mean a tighter federal budget; spending growth over the next five years would have to be held to 2 per cent instead of 5 per cent. But it does not necessarily entail slashing Social Security checks, let alone by a specific amount. "The Democrats are running the most incredible campaign of distortion in their history," says one Republican House aide. "All they can do now is try to scare the sick and elderly."

And that was the more high-minded aspect of many Democratic campaigns. In Georgia 11-year incumbent Buddy Darden tried to hang on to his seat by calling his challenger, Bob Barr, a deadbeat dad. A Darden TV spot says Barr was sued by his ex-wife for dodging child-support payments. Barr and his ex-wife did have a dispute—over the payment of some of the children's medical bills. But she denounced the ads as a distortion. The same Darden spot accused Barr of having defended a child molester. Barr once did—as a court-appointed lawyer.

"Democrats lost the battle of legislative wits, and they're down on their new-idea wits," says Republican consultant Ed Goeas, "so they're using whatever they can."

Where were the news-media truth squads? Sometimes they were admirably bi-partisan. Senator Jim Sasser's Medicare-cut spot was taken apart in a piece in the *Tennesseean* headlined "Ad's claim 'wildly misleading.'" But coverage was spotty. In New Mexico, Senator Jeff Bingaman got away with Medicare attack ads just as factually flimsy as Sasser's. And elsewhere the local press has seemed to do more to abet distortion than to combat it.

At a GOP forum in March, Indiana congressional candidate John Hostettler said he supported the separation of church and state because state involvement in religion could lead to persecution; he cited Christ's crucifixion as an example. The *Evansville Press* reporter covering the event noted merely that "Hostettler stood behind the separation of church and state." But after Hostettler won the Republican nomination, the *Press* began investigating the remark as possibly "anti-Semitic." Hostettler met with a local rabbi to explain his comment. According to the Capitol Hill newspaper, *Roll Call*, the DNC put Hostettler on its list of the top ten Republican extremists partly because he "had to meet with local Jewish leaders to assure them he had not been criticizing Jews . . . during a candidates forum."

The beauty of negative campaigning, especially when there's no media watchdog, is that it's a winner. House Speaker Thomas Foley proudly declared at one rally: "I have never attacked people in any of my campaigns, and I'm not going to do that in this campaign." But around the same time, DNC official Tony Coelho was publicly urging the endangered Speaker to go negative. "The professionals will tell you and every poll that you look at tells you it works," Coelho said. Soon Foley was running ads accusing his opponent, George Nethercutt, of wanting to gut child-immunization and student-loan programs, and of supporting the "Contract with America," which would supposedly mean cutting Social Security checks by $170 a month or slashing Medicare by 31 per cent. Foley raised more than $1 million this year to back his attack message.

So old-style Democrats like Foley just may sneak back into office on the strength of their war chests and distortions. But campaigns have consequences; one way or the other, they affect the governing agenda. Thus, President Reagan's issueless "Morning Again in America" campaign in 1984 heralded the end of any attempt to advance the Reagan Revolution. Clinton's New Democrat campaign in 1992 meant the abandonment of traditional liberalism—and helped make it impossible, as Clinton discovered, to resurrect it once elected. This year's sour and vapid Democratic campaigns may well be the final plunge in the party's ideological collapse. □

Profits of Peace

MICHAEL WIDLANSKI

ARAVA CROSSING

As a 21-gun salute opened the signing ceremonies for the Israeli–Jordanian Peace Treaty, real cannons and Soviet-made Katyusha rockets were going off along Israel's border with Lebanon. The Islamic Hezbollah ("Party of God"), which receives support from both Iran and Syria, was sending its own message to the peacemakers. And while King Hussein and President Clinton made their way to the podium in the desert wilderness between Eilat and Aqaba, a somber Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was getting news of Israelis taking to bomb shelters.

The Israeli–Jordanian Peace Treaty came in the wake of one of the worst waves of terrorism in Israel's history (26 Israelis dead in 10 days). Israelis have lost faith in last year's big peace spectacular, the Israel–PLO agreements; indeed, a poll by the DAHAF Institute conducted the week before the Jordanian treaty signing found that 71 per cent of the population favored a military incursion into Gaza to round up the leaders and backers of the Islamic radicals who have been killing Israelis. Most Israelis were not in a mood to celebrate, even though an overwhelming majority—including the rightist Likud—supports the Jordanian treaty.

"Peace between Jordan and Israel is no longer a mirage," said President Clinton. Yet unlike Israel and the PLO, Israel and Jordan have essentially been at peace for at least 24 years. Though neither side talks about it much, Israel has more than five times the trade with Jordan that it has with Egypt, and several hundred thousand Jordanians and other Arabs cross the "open bridges" on the Jordan River each year. Peace has reigned since the time Palestinians call "Black September" of 1970, when Israel helped Jordan against both the PLO and Syria. It was then that Yasir Arafat's PLO was banished from Jordanian soil and its state within a state uprooted (it later established a new one in Lebanon). Syria's artillery and infantry began an invasion to support Arafat, but Hussein pushed them back. Syria decided not to use its air force after Israel made it clear that it would intervene to protect Hussein.

In October 1973, King Hussein himself made a secret visit to Tel Aviv to warn then–Prime Minister Golda Meir of an impending attack by Syria and Egypt on Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement. Although Israel took no

Mr. Widlanski is a writer in Jerusalem.

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serious action based on this warning, the king needed to cover his tracks, so he sent several battalions of his well-trained army to fight alongside Syria in the Golan Heights (how much fighting they really did is unclear).

Before the recent public talks, Hussein had met with Israeli prime ministers more than twenty times, beginning in 1963. Some of these clandestine meetings involved intricate planning, including setting up kosher Sabbath meals for Yitzhak Shamir and his advisors, Eli Rubinstein and Yossi Ben-Aharon, in Hussein's London home, complete with sacramental wine and gefilte fish.

The long-standing ties between Jordan and Israel help explain King Hussein's popularity among Israelis. By contrast, PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat, whom Rabin and Hussein did not invite to the treaty ceremony, is viewed with suspicion. Arafat, who has been selected to receive a Nobel Peace Prize along with Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, condemned the Israeli–Jordanian treaty as an attempt to disfranchise Palestinians. Furthermore, he has not fulfilled a single one of the promises or contractual obligations linked to the Israel–PLO Declaration of Principles signed in September 1993. Rather than curbing Palestinian terror, he has presided in Gaza and Jericho as units of the Islamic extremist HAMAS movement (and sometimes rogue units of his own Fatah organization) have continued to strike at Israeli civilians. After the recent wave of attacks, including one involving a Kalashnikov rifle that somehow managed to get from Arafat's PLO police into the hands of a HAMAS terrorist, Arafat detained 400 HAMAS activists, releasing 388 of them before President Clinton came to town.

In his speech at the treaty signing, Clinton condemned the terrorists who "take aim" at the Arab–Israeli police process. The next day he visited Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, who has condemned the peace treaty and who continues to support terrorism. American officials hope Assad will not sabotage the Israeli–Jordanian agreement, as he sabotaged the U.S.-brokered treaty between Israel and Lebanon in 1983.

Assuming he does not, the benefits for both parties will be substantial. Hussein finally got Israel to accept the rough outlines of the Johnston water allocation plan of the 1950s as well as the return of 116 square miles of land Israel had expropriated for security and agricultural reasons in 1968–1970. Israel, meanwhile, got an Arab country to accept the proposition that "territory for peace" does not necessarily mean all territory. Hussein agreed to territorial modifications and to Israel's leasing of some disputed territory. This last point may prove a crucial precedent for talks with Syria, which wants a total, Sinai-like withdrawal from Golan, something more than 80 per cent of the Israeli public opposes.

Hussein also got a reaffirmation and formalization of his ties to the Jewish State. The Israel–PLO Declaration had alarmed him into thinking that Israel was abandoning its traditional (if surreptitious) strategic alliance with him. Indeed, the estimable quarterly *Foreign Affairs* published an article several months ago entitled "Is Jordan Doomed?" From the vantage point of the Arava ceremony, the best answer seems to be: not yet. □

Alice in Budgetland

LAWRENCE KUDLOW

Roman Genn

WASHINGTON, D.C.

THERE must be something about the air in Room 245 of the Old Executive Office Building, where successive directors of the Office of Management and Budget have dwelt in splendid isolation, genuflecting at the altar of the balanced budget and obsessing over the current deficit, completely divorced from political and economic reality. Most recently Alice Rivlin, and before her David Stockman and Richard Darman, somehow decided that they, and not their President or political party, must set the agenda.

In 1982, Stockman (after his earlier perfidy in *The Atlantic Monthly*) made sure everyone in town knew about various Social Security benefit-reduction proposals being considered by the Greenspan Commission. Later that year the Democrats used this to trash Republicans in the mid-term election, costing the GOP 26 seats in the House. In 1985, Stockman and Darman kept pushing President Reagan toward a freeze in Social Security cost-of-living adjustments and other cuts. The Gipper eventually backed away from the deal, but Democrats used it mercilessly in 1986 to help recapture the Senate. In 1990, of course, Darman and Chief of Staff John Sununu pushed President Bush into a high-tax budget deal that doomed his Presidency.

This year the shoe is on the other foot. As the Democrats launched their ritual election-eve accusations about Republicans bent on slashing Social Security, a thermonuclear memo from Alice Rivlin found its way, via Bill Kristol, to the front page of the *Washington Post*. This "illustrative package" detailed $725 billion in entitlement savings, including cuts in Social Security COLAs, cuts in benefit payments, and another increase in the tax on benefits, along with Medicare rollbacks, COLA deferrals, and contribution increases for federal retirees.

In addition, the Rivlin memo proposed $775 billion in tax increases, including sharp limits on mortgage-interest deductions, elimination of the state-and-local-tax deduction, higher capital-gains taxes for estates and inheritances, tax hikes for "above average" health plans, elimination of itemized deductions above the 15 per cent tax bracket, and a repeal of tax-bracket inflation indexing. The plan also includes a 2.5 per cent value-added tax,

Mr. Kudlow is NR*'s economics editor.*

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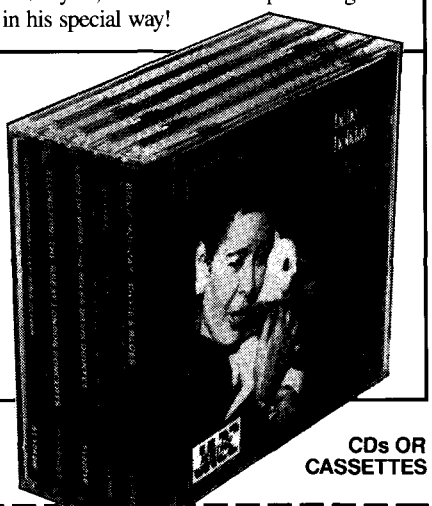

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estimated to bring in $160 billion, for a grand five-year total tax hike of $935 billion.

This plus the entitlement savings would be used to finance nearly $50 billion of "government investment" programs (read: more spending) including an infrastructure bank, a national information infrastructure system, National Service Corporations expansion, more Head Start, Education Goals 2000, job training, a $10-billion welfare-reform add-on, 24 new Metro Empowerment Zones, and a "clean car" program. All told, Mrs. Rivlin hopes to lower the budget deficit total by $274 billion ("modest") to $399 billion ("steeper and deeper") over the next five years.

Mrs. Rivlin's memo, which is entitled "Big Choices," agrees that the defeat of President Clinton's health-care package leaves the Administration without a domestic policy. And she says, "We know that the Republican strategy features empty promises about deficit reduction and unspecified spending cuts coupled with attractive-sounding tax cuts." She is anxious to respond in advance of Senator Bob Kerrey's entitlement-commission report, which is expected by mid December. Yet the Rivlin memo is part of the normal fall budget review conducted each year by the OMB director. That is why the non-denial denials by Mr. Clinton and Chief of Staff Leon Panetta ring so hollow.

So far, Mrs. Rivlin has not been taken to the woodshed. Indeed, observes Senator Phil Gramm (R., Tex.), "this is not just a set of options, but a clearly defined agenda which continues to transfer resources from the private sector to the public sector." In fact, there is not one single policy item designed to encourage economic growth by encouraging *private* saving, investing, or risk-taking. Aside from mounting another assault on the "rich," Mrs. Rivlin continues to believe that high-tax deficit reduction will "release saving for private investment and reduce long-term interest rates." But the facts say otherwise. Following the tax-heavy budget deals of 1990 and 1993, the economy is experiencing a sub-par recovery in which private saving and household net-worth accumulation is running well behind the 1980s pace. We will never tax our way to higher saving or wealth creation.

Moreover, despite Clinton's crowing over this year's $203-billion budget deficit and his forecast that next year's may be lower, the baseline used in Mrs. Rivlin's memo shows the deficit rising to $235 billion by the year 2000, and the Congressional Budget Office puts it at $257 billion. What's more, since passage of last year's budget deal, long-term interest rates have skyrocketed and the dollar has plummeted. After reviving during the Reagan Eighties, the U.S. economy's long-run potential to grow has been so sapped by tax and regulatory reversals that the CBO now projects only 2.4 per cent annual growth during the next five years, significantly below our 45-year postwar trend of 3.1 per cent.

True enough, the deficit is still unconquered, and entitlement programs are the problem. According to the CBO, during the next five years mandatory programs are scheduled to increase at a 6.9 per cent annual rate, roughly twice the expected pace of inflation. This includes a 5.2 per cent yearly rise for Social Security (which will face a cash deficit in 2013), 7.3 per cent for Medicare (already teetering on the edge of bankruptcy), and a whopping 12.4 per cent annual rate for Medicaid.

Interrupting his home-district campaigning in Ohio, GOP budget leader John Kasich says, "We need an entirely new framework and new ideas. We must privatize operations of government as often as possible, turn programs back to the states, and eliminate things that have no purpose." He is exactly right. This must include "opt-out" reform of Social Security for *private* retirement investment, expanded *private* health insurance, a co-payment scheme to reform Medicaid and Medicare, and *private* learning centers and community organizations to end welfare dependency. Only a thorough restructuring and downsizing, with strict expense control—much in the way corporate America has downsized and restructured—will permanently reduce the deficit. Ultimately, if we are to eliminate the deficit and put federal finance and the economy on a sound footing, this must be combined with a new tax- and budget-cutting agenda to foster capital formation and work effort, replacing bureaucratic dictates with market choice.

For all her distinguished public service as the CBO's first budget director, as a fiscal scholar at the Brookings Institution, and as OMB director, and despite her Radcliffe Ph.D. and her many publications, Mrs. Rivlin refuses to peer into the twenty-first century. She does not yet grasp that the public believes the Federal Government is too big, costly, and wasteful, controlling too much of daily life. Perhaps next week's election results will pump some fresh air into Room 245. □

The War of the Waleses

ANTHONY LEJEUNE

LONDON

THE literary missiles whizzing between the two camps in the War of the Waleses make a fine pyrotechnic show, and the latest high-explosive shell, in the form of Prince Charles's authorized biography, appears to have burst above his own trench: but they have caused rather less material damage than the anti-war party suggests.

Of course the Prince and Princess are hurt and angry with each other: their children and Charles's parents may well have been wounded: and they all deserve as much compassion as any other family caught in such unhappy circumstances. No one doubts that the Princess's alleged lover—"love rat James Hewitt," as the *Daily Express* refers to him—behaved like a cad, kissing and then telling for money. Few people deny that the Prince's treatment of his young bride, and his self-indulgent confession now, were, to say the least, grossly inconsiderate. Nevertheless, Britain remains sharply divided into pro-Charles and pro-Diana factions. The divide is, to a significant degree, sexual; Diana's fiercest critics (apart from the Prince's personal entourage) are predominantly female.

The people around Charles have consistently underrated Diana's power. Time and again they have believed that, voluntarily or involuntarily, she would vanish from the front pages,

Mr. Lejeune is NR*'s longtime London correspondent.*

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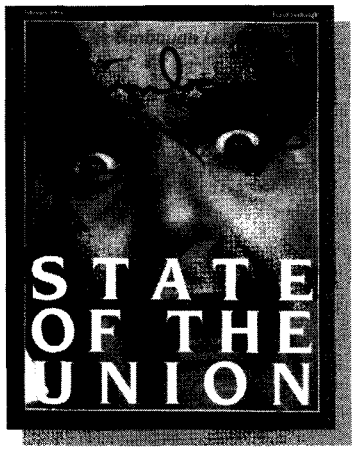

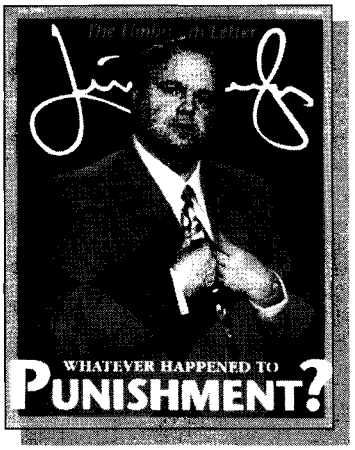

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leaving the Prince in command of the field. Some vanishing! Diana, whom the camera loves (especially when looking sad), is unconquerable—a truth which Buckingham Palace would have been wise to accept.

There is another, more profound, split in Britain, between those who cannot get enough of the royal story and those who think it should have been suppressed. The spearhead of the latter group, the official prigs, barefacedly denied every rumor until it was proved true. They blamed, and continue to blame, the press. Oddly enough, a section of the press itself, the conservative *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraph*, has taken the same line, though never hesitating to print the juicy details. Unofficial prigs have followed suit. "Hang the media!" said one man-in-the-street when interviewed on the radio.

It is, however, the politicians who have jumped most enthusiastically onto the priggish bandwagon. They are still seeking laws to gag the media, which, they say, by prurient carping have undermined all the country's basic institutions—the monarchy, the Church of England, Parliament. There is a difference, they argue, between what interests the public and what, in the public interest, should be published. They particularly accuse the papers owned by Rupert Murdoch, which have taken the lead in publishing the Charles and Diana story, of being motivated by republican malice.

This is largely nonsense. There is no republican conspiracy. Nothing that has been revealed harms the monarchy as an institution. In a way, the royal family has more popular appeal now than ever before within living memory. Who would wish to swap this rich tale for a mere commonplace presidency?

(What would be disastrous is if there were any question about the legitimacy of the succession; which is why it remains, in theory, a capital offense to ravish the Queen or the wife of the heir to the throne. Major Hewitt could properly have his head chopped off, and, if Diana were shown to have cooperated with his treason, she could be burnt at the stake, like Guinevere. But when George IV wanted to invoke the treason laws against his unfaithful wife, he was firmly told that, in view of his own behavior, this would not go down well. Diana's admirers needn't tremble for her.)

That the royal family should be treated as characters in a soap opera became inevitable once they were deprived of any political or social role—a loss ("The Queen reigns, she does not rule") of which the official prigs normally boast. The idea that the public should be more interested in the Prince of Wales's constitutional role and good works than in his tormented private life is absurd. To suggest that it was the media which destroyed his marriage is, in the light of what we now know, equally absurd.

When the politicians complain about the effect of the media on the country's institutions, they are thinking less about the monarchy or the Church, for

Roman Genn

which many of them care very little, than about themselves, for whom they care very much. And, as usual, they are blaming the messenger.

It is true that the House of Commons has fallen to an unprecedentedly low level in public esteem. The so-called "sleaze factor" has pushed even the royal family off the front pages during the past week or so. To the series of sexual misdemeanors which earlier toppled a few minor members of the government have now been added less amusing instances of money being taken for asking questions in Parliament, expensive hotel rooms paid for, and "consultancies" omitted from the register of MPs' interests.

Doubts have also been expressed about the propriety of ex-ministers' becoming highly paid directors of companies which they had helped to privatize, and about the political patronage involved in appointments to the quasi-governmental bodies which still proliferate like toadstools. Two more ministers have gone. One reluctant resigner—the minister for business probity, no less—hotly declared his innocence and blamed "a media witch-hunt."

What has chiefly provoked disillusionment, however, is not the MPs' private misdeeds but their collective behavior. People were genuinely shocked by the ruthless manner in which the Maastricht Treaty was forced through Parliament, contrary to the known wishes of the electorate, and are increasingly outraged by the surrender to Brussels of rights and freedoms which they had believed inalienable. They resent the complacency, the evasions, the sheer incomprehension which so many politicians display.

Backbench members of Parliament, having yielded their independence, no longer fulfill their duty of keeping governments in check. Neither Prime Minister John Major nor the new leader of the Labour Party, Tony Blair, seems overburdened with political philosophy. Decent enough they may be, but they could hardly inspire a wet sponge. Labour's tacticians have been seeking advice from the spin doctors of the Clinton Administration, which seems like consulting Lizzie Borden about family values: and the managers of the Conservative Party, like Californians determined to ignore the San Andreas fault, keep sliding around the potentially catastrophic question of Europe.

Labour, at the moment, appears set to win the next election—still two years off—not because its policies are very popular, or even clear, but simply because the government has accumulated so much antipathy. Britain's economy is moving rather well, and the Conservatives believe they should benefit: but when the chancellor of the exchequer says there can be no tax cuts (there have been large tax rises) until the government borrowing requirement comes down, he talks as if the borrowing requirement were a fact of nature for which the government bears no responsibility.

British voters, like American voters, are angry. But not with the Waleses. Compared to the politicians' bickering, the Charles and Diana story comes as a welcome relief. Here at least are two flesh-and-blood human beings, loving and suffering, with passions, jealousies, and affections which we can all understand. □

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RANDOM WALK

THANKS to OMB Director Alice Rivlin's controversial budget memo, Social Security is back in the news. She proposes to slash benefits, then raise taxes on them, then raise the payroll taxes that employers and employees pay into the system. Republicans, however, simply refuse to talk openly about the problem of Social Security overspending and underfunding, even though a cash deficit is expected by 2013, if not sooner.

Third Millennium, an organization of baby-boomers, recently commissioned a poll of 18-to-34-year-old high-school graduates that found more respondents believe in UFOs (46 per cent) than believe they will receive Social Security benefits (28 per cent). Even worse, Peter Ferrara of the National Center for Policy Analysis estimates that most workers entering the work force in the mid 1980s will get a paltry 1 per cent or less annual real rate of retirement return from all the tax money they pay into the Social Security system.

Compare this with a recent study by Lipper Analytical Services that shows the Fidelity Magellan Fund's annual rate of return during the last 25 years averaged 17.9 per cent in nominal market terms, or 12 per cent adjusted for 5.9 per cent inflation. Or going back more than 70 years, the annual real rate of return for the whole S&P 500 stock-market index averaged 7 per cent, according to Ibbotson Associates.

In other words, young workers who are *forced* to let the Social Security Administration manage their hard-earned retirement savings will find themselves completely short-changed in their old age. But if they were permitted to opt out of the system and invest their own money, they could take advantage of the wealth-creating magic of the marketplace to retire very comfortably. Private markets would replace government spending, with a huge budget saving, and no tax increases would be necessary.

■ Financial markets were delighted with the third-quarter GDP report of 3.4 per cent annual real growth and 1.6 per cent inflation. Washington, D.C., supply-side economist John Mueller, however, predicts that inflation will reach 4 per cent in 1995 and 4.5 per cent in 1996. Meanwhile, he expects real growth to drop to 2.5 per cent in 1995 and "close to zero" in 1996. His "liquidity index"—which tracks high-powered money created by the Fed and foreign central banks and absorbed by the real economy and the financial markets—is starting to falter as a result of central-bank tightening. He believes this squeeze will cut the Dow Jones index by at least 350 points during the period ahead.

■ "I'll never understand," says University of Chicago economist and Nobel laureate Merton Miller, "why they call bonds 'fixed income.'" After investors finish sifting through the bond-market wreckage of 1994, the "fixed income" label may be forever banished from Wall Streeters' vocabulary. "1994 is the year of the worst bond-market loss in history," writes Al Ehrbar in *Fortune*. He calculates that the dollar value of the massacre in U.S. bond markets amounted to $600 billion for just the first seven months of the year. The losses could top $1 trillion by year's end.

"Miss Jessup, what's today's buzzword?"

Weston Hicks, senior insurance research analyst at Sanford Bernstein & Co., estimates that life-insurance funds have already lost $50 billion in the book value of their bond holdings. Meanwhile, mutual funds have lost $45 billion, and the figure is climbing. Of the 2,500 major "fixed income" mutual funds in the U.S., the average rate of return this year is a pitiful *minus* 4 per cent. Property and casualty insurers have seen the value of their portfolios drop by more than $20 billion. That's roughly equal to the losses from Hurricane Andrew and the Northridge earthquake combined.

This bond-market drubbing was never supposed to happen, of course. The Clinton economic program was predicated on the bizarre superstition that higher taxes would produce lower interest rates. In reality, one can trace the beginning of the bear market for bonds back to almost the very day that Congress ratified the Clinton tax hike in August 1993. Thirty-year Treasury bond yields were at 5.9 per cent. The Treasury should have sold a ton of bonds back then; instead, it sharply cut back its offerings. Today the bonds yield 8 per cent, and the rate is rising, costing taxpayers a fortune. The bond market knows what the Clintons do not: higher taxes raise inflation fears and interest rates. This is a bad fix for fixed income.

■ In a recent column I noted that thousands of California businesses and workers are stampeding across state lines in search of less tax- and regulation-happy jurisdictions. Texas, one of nine states with no income tax, has lured over 500 companies from the Golden State in the last three years. Now California Governor Pete Wilson's development office is fighting back with a slick ad campaign aimed at convincing businesses to stay put. One ad, entitled "Why Texas Is Telling Tall Tales about California," warns against the state's "sub-zero weather, three-shower-a-day humidity, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and mosquitoes that require runways to land." To top it all off: "What Texas still hasn't promised is a surefire way to fit a gun rack on a convertible." And what California still hasn't promised is a business climate as friendly as its weather. —GEKKO

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Why Kemp and Bennett Are Wrong

AMERICA'S IDENTITY CRISIS

Immigration enthusiasts like to say
that America is an idea, not a nation.
If their arguments prevail,
we may be left with little more than an idea.

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

THE RECENT "Statement on Immigration" by Jack Kemp and William J. Bennett has been generally reported by the media as an attack on California's Proposition 187, which would bar illegal immigrants from receiving non-emergency social benefits. WFB contests their argument on 187 elsewhere in this issue (see page 78). And it is worth noting that, according to polls, about half of California's Latino voters support the proposition that Mr. Kemp and Mr. Bennett claim would lead to anti-Latino discrimination.

But Kemp and Bennett go beyond arguments over Proposition 187—which the voters (or the courts) will shortly decide—to offer a strong defense of immigration in principle. While they propose some measures to strengthen control of U.S. borders and even to speed up the deportation of illegal immigrants convicted of crimes, they oppose attempts to reduce the level of legal immigration. Indeed, they argue that immigrants are a net economic and social benefit to America, that immigration is not a major contributor to America's cultural problems, and that immigrants and immigration are at the core of America's identity as a nation.

But are these claims true? In particular, is immigration at the present rate an expression of America's identity, or a threat to it? In 1776 America's identity was essentially that of the Protestant British settlers who constituted about four-fifths of the population that declared independence from George III. As Russell Kirk documented in his last book, *America's British Culture*, American culture and the original American identity—to which subsequent immigrants and their children assimilated—had British foundations and a British core.

Of course, the original Americanism was enriched by the influences of immigrants from other cultures. Just as Christianity is the universalization of Judaism, so Americanism is the universalization of British culture. And in being universalized that culture changed to produce a distinctive American culture and identity.

America's sense of itself always had a self-conscious, even ideological, side. First, the United States, founded by a rebellion against legitimate authority, had to explain and justify that rebellion to mankind. Then, the growing nation had to justify taking over a continent from its previous owners. Finally, it had to persuade the immigrants arriving on that continent that, in assimilating to the American nation, they were not being false to themselves, that Americanism was in some sense a universal creed to which all could be admitted.

Yet cultural myth and cultural reality diverged markedly. In real life, what was important was the assimilation to a WASP norm; in public and official rhetoric what was stressed was the universalist justification. And as time went by, that meant America's national identity was increasingly expressed in political formulae—a nation of immigrants, an idea rather than a nation—that were curiously abstract and detached from the everyday experience of most Americans.

America as an Idea

THE PHRASE "a nation of immigrants" is a rhetorical kindness to new arrivals. All nations are composed of immigrants if you go back far enough (including "Native American" nations). But demographers estimate that even if there had been no immigration at all after the first Census in 1790 the U.S. population by the mid 1980s would have been as much as half what it was in fact. The post-1790 immigrants assimilated to an American nation that was already here and in secure possession of a national character.

The assertion that America is an idea rather than a nation is more powerful and deserves sustained exami-

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nation. Americans on this view are Americans not by virtue of being born into a community of Americans and being shaped by an American upbringing and culture. Indeed, it is commonly said that there is no common American culture, still less an American ethnicity, to shape and unite them. Rather, Americans are defined by their allegiance to a set of liberal political principles, notably liberty and equality, outlined in the Declaration of Independence and embodied in the Constitution.

Thus Edward Luttwak writes in his book *The Endangered American Dream*: "Americans have no shared national culture to unite them as the French or Italians have—there are many different cultures in our pluralist society. Nor can Americans rely on ethnic solidarity alone, as the Japanese say they can—we have many different ethnic origins. What Americans have in common are their shared beliefs, above all in equality of opportunity in the pursuit of affluence." Mark Falcoff wrote similarly in *Commentary*: "Uniquely among nations, America is a 'proposition country'; it has no history and identity apart from certain eighteenth-century political notions embodied in its Constitution and Common Law."

But if your identity is defined by a constitution, what happens when the constitution changes? A famous *Punch* cartoon shows an Englishman in a public library asking for a copy of the French constitution. "I am sorry, sir," the librarian replies, "but we do not stock periodicals." The French have resolved any dilemma here with characteristic Gallic logic: their constitution has no influence on how France is governed.

But in America the Constitution is genuinely respected; indeed, it has a quasi-religious status. If it is also a definition of national identity, then reinterpreting it, as recent Supreme Courts have liberally done, would mean, in effect, reshaping the nation. If there is no common culture on hand to shape and occasionally restrain such reinterpretations, then they will tend to arbitrariness and judicial tyranny. And if there is no common American ethnicity uniting Americans, then the judicial edicts are likely to stimulate civil strife among the nation's component ethnic groups as some benefit and some suffer from them. In short, if America consists of very different peoples, with very different understandings of what is virtuous, sensible, noble, or merely comfortable, and united only in their allegiance to liberty, equality, and prosperity, then they will eventually wage wars over the proper definition of the first two terms, and over the proper allocation of the third.

The philosophical conception portrays America not as a product of history, accident, and ancestry but as an "experiment," an "idea," a design for living together, more successful perhaps than the Soviet experiment or the Yugoslav experiment, but belonging essentially to the same brand of ideological, rationalist politics. No other nation that has stood the test of time is the product of such an ideological exercise—although several nations, such as the French, have ideological components in their identity. Almost all the ideological nations have collapsed, generally in acrimony. And when they have done so, they have broken down into historic nations with roots in common sentiments and a common heritage.

This should make a conservative suspicious of this theory of nationhood. And, indeed, the conservative view of American identity that underlies my argument holds that America is a nation no different from any other—almost. If I may quote from my article in NATIONAL REVIEW's special issue on multiculturalism (Feb. 21):

> A nation is an ethno-cultural unit—a body that begins its life as a cultural in-gathering but, by dint of common history, habits, tastes, shared experiences, tales, songs, memories, and, above all, intermarriage, becomes progressively more like an extended family—that is, more ethnic—over time. . . . Where America differs from nations like the British is that the process of *becoming* a nation, of moving from cultural to ethnic homogeneity, has been punctuated and slowed down at regular intervals by large-scale immigration from a variety of countries and, more recently, from a variety of cultures.
>
> . . . And because it is more cultural than ethnic, this identity is also more inclusive. It is possible to *become* an American—or in effect, a WASP—in a way it has long since ceased to be possible to become a Slovak or a Pole.
>
> . . . The longer that new Americans inhabit the same common culture as everyone else, the closer they draw to each other—as the figures for intermarriage indicate. A growing sense of common nationhood in the European sense is the natural result of that process.

Distinguishing Marks

BETWEEN the ideological view of American identity and this ethno-cultural view, there are several distinctions. The first is that a culture is infinitely richer and more complex than a political philosophy. T. S. Eliot, defining culture as "all the characteristic activities and interests of a people," gave the following list as descriptive of English culture in the 1930s: "Derby Day, Henley Regatta, Cowes, the Twelfth of August, a cup final, the dog races, the pin table, the dart board, Wensleydale cheese, boiled cabbage cut into sections, beetroot in vinegar, nineteenth-century Gothic churches, and the music of Elgar."

A similar list evoking American culture might be the Kentucky Derby, the World Series, summer camp, bowling, hamburgers and hot dogs, peanut butter, the skyscraper, Irving Berlin, the King James Bible, the New York skyline, country-and-western music, *Dallas*, jeans, button-down shirts, and Hollywood movies.

The greater force of this cultural view of American identity is illustrated by an incident in the Second World War. During the Battle of the Bulge, German commandos were roaming around in American uniforms, and GIs seeking to establish the true identity of other soldiers asked questions to test their Americanism. Did they ask them their view of equality or the rights of popular government? Of course not; mere ideas of that kind could be parroted—indeed, genuinely be-

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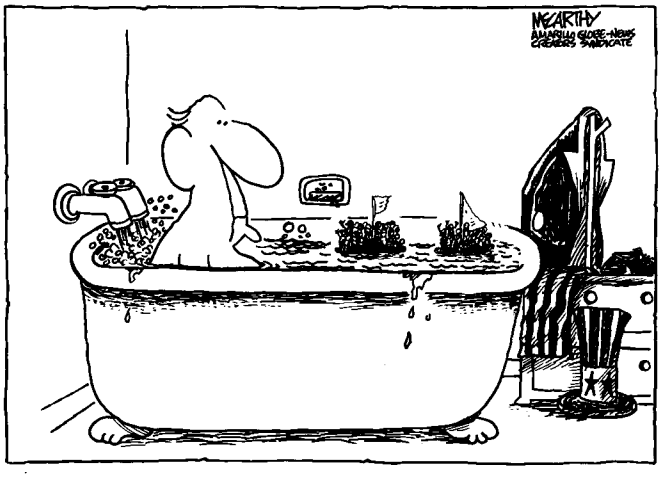
lieved—by non-Americans. No, they asked them details of American life in the broadest cultural context—the



winner of the previous World Series, radio advertising jingles, the capital of their home state, Mae West's bust measurements. In short, the kinds of things that every American would know—but that a foreigner could not easily study. In his book *The Blood-Dimmed Tide*, Gerald Astor describes how two Allied generals coped:

> General Omar Bradley said: "Three times I was ordered to prove my identity by cautious GIs. The first time by identifying Springfield as the capital of Illinois (my questioner held out for Chicago); the second time by locating the guard between the center and tackle on a line of scrimmage; the third time by naming the then-current spouse of a blonde called Betty Grable. Grable stopped me (the correct answer was bandleader Harry James) but the sentry did not. Pleased at having stopped me he . . . passed me on."
>
> General Montgomery . . . imperiously directed his driver to ignore the sentry. The guard shot out the tires of his car and held the British commander for several hours. When he heard of the incident, Eisenhower enjoyed one of his few laughs during the Bulge . . .

Of course, Jefferson's idea of America in the Declaration of Independence and the rules of political life laid down in the Constitution are part of this Americanism. They are the conscious political expression of the broader social, political, legal, and moral culture described by Kirk. Indeed, the above lists perhaps err by being overly social and insufficiently political; they might be enriched by including such items as the jury system, which embodies a sense of fairness, or parliamentary debate, which captures the ritualization of conflict in English-speaking societies. That does not alter the main conclusion: what shapes Americans and American national identity is the richness of the entire culture, not merely its conscious political expression.

So the conservative view is a truer and more comprehensive account of America's national identity.

The second point of difference is that the laws and customs deriving from a philosophical statement are bound to be narrower and more abstract than those which rise up from a living culture. Anomalies, eccentricities, local exceptions, specific privileges are the stuff of a society that has grown up naturally and higgledy-piggledy. When politicians and lawyers seek to make that society conform to abstract ideas, even virtuous ideas like liberty and equality to which the society gives broad allegiance, they will inevitably ride roughshod over local traditions and community standards. In doing so, they will reduce the variety of ways of living in that society, and so reduce real freedom and choice.

This could be illustrated by any number of federal court decisions. But the recent case of Shannon Faulkner versus the Citadel in South Carolina makes the point very effectively. Miss Faulkner's argument is that the Fourteenth Amendment dictates that no single individual may be denied opportunity on account of race or sex; hence no institution can discriminate on those grounds. Yet if Miss Faulkner's view is ultimately upheld by the courts, then the Citadel will no longer be single-sex. And, as Elizabeth Fox-Genovese points out, "it accordingly follows that the countless individuals who might seek a single-sex education would have nothing left to choose. . . . Suddenly, instead of expanding choice for individuals, we have destroyed it."

A conservative, while acknowledging the rights of the individual, will seek to reconcile them with long-established ways of community living. Those ways will generally stress religion, moral values, and local traditions; but they will also offer escape hatches—whether monasteries or red-light districts—for those who find such values irksome or confining. Hence, the cultural concept of nationhood will lead to a society that is more varied, more messy, less logical, perhaps less just. But that society will be more satisfying to more people than a society attempting to realize itself as an idea.

Third, the conservative cultural view of America offers a protection against the virus of multiculturalism; the philosophical theory does not. If America is nothing more than a philosophical umbrella sheltering individual rights, and individuals wish to exercise their rights by adopting a cultural identity different from the general "American" identity, they cannot be consistently discouraged from doing so. Horace Kallen, the inventor of "cultural pluralism"—a precursor of multiculturalism, at the turn of the century—described what this would eventually mean when he saw America as "a democracy of nationalities." Multiculturalism of that kind is not an inevitable development of philosophical Americanism; but it is a legitimate one.

We cannot get around this, as some conservatives are wont to try, by saying that the Constitution protects individual rights, not group rights. For in public life individuals pursue their rights and interests by forming groups. And if a substantial body of citizens announces that it wants to conduct its dealings with the Federal Government in Spanish, or that it wants the public schools to teach its children the culture and history of Japan, or that it is oppressed if its heroes are not celebrated equally alongside the Founding Fathers, there is nothing in the notion of America as a philosophical proposition to justify denying these demands.

Indeed, the behavior of liberals confirms that they can

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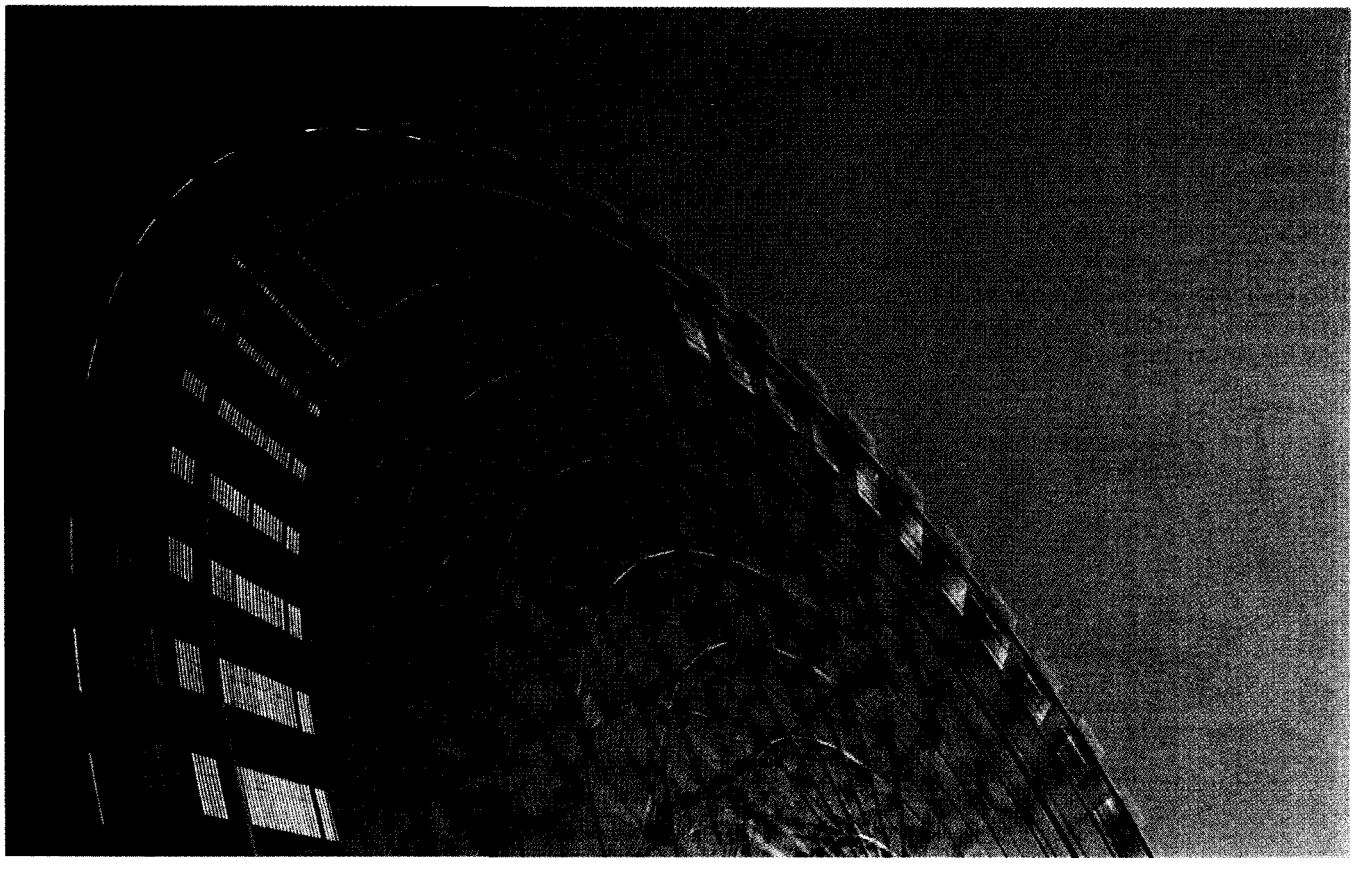

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offer no real resistance to multiculturalism. The *principled* liberal is equally hostile to all cultures, for instance overriding both Christianity and Islam without distinction where they conflict with sexual equality. He cannot therefore defend or even tolerate those American traditions that infringe on individual rights. The *instinctive* liberal is equally friendly to all cultures, for instance embracing even those cultures that have no truck with individual rights. One of the more macabre entertainments of recent times was the battle between these two schools of thought in the correspondence columns of the *New York Times* over whether clitoridectomy was a horrible violation of women's rights or a legitimate expression of Third World culture beyond our ken.

As liberalism increasingly loses its bearings, suffering

a nervous breakdown, liberals migrate from the rights of individuals to those of cultures. Multiculturalism is thus liberalism deconstructing itself. Unfortunately, it may help to deconstruct America in the process.

The conservative theory of American nationhood, on the other hand, does offer protection against multiculturalism. Indeed, a theory that America is a common culture evolving into an ethnicity that encompasses other ethnicities must run directly counter to multiculturalism. Hence, the cultural theory justifies denying the demands of the multiculturalists because such demands undermine the cultural basis of nationhood and by extension the unity of America.

Conservative Confusion

NOW, when we list these three points of distinction between the cultural and ideological theories of American national identity you might expect that conservatives would be more or less unanimous in their endorsement of the former. Yet that is not so. Conservatives are among the most fervent supporters of America as an idea, and the passages I quoted above were drawn from conservative writers. Why?

First, the dangerous implications of ideological Americanism have become apparent only recently, with the emergence of multiculturalism. Until a few years ago, phrases like "a nation of immigrants" or "an idea, not a nation," were benign national myths that served mainly to comfort new arrivals in the great Republic. In those circumstances it scarcely mattered that they were not strictly true, and very few people foresaw where they would lead. Writers and politicians interested in these questions developed arguments around the American idea. And in intellectual life, just as in economic life, people are very reluctant to write off fixed capital.

If that were the sole reason, we could afford to let time and the multiculturalists solve our problem, because virtually all conservatives would eventually be driven by irritation at them into the cultural camp. Unfortunately, there is a more profound issue separating conservatives. For the cultural theory of American identity, like the philosophical, has a hidden implication. If America is a nation whose progress from a cultural identity to an ethnic one is interrupted by large-scale immigration, then we would need pauses or reductions in immigration to digest the previous wave of immigrants and to assimilate them successfully into the American nation.

And there are good reasons to suspect that this is indeed the case. High immigration undermines America's identity in three ways. First, it strengthens and reinforces ethnic subcultures in American society. For instance, the arrival of more and more people speaking a language other than English means, quite simply, that those already here who speak that language will have more opportunity to continue doing so and less incentive to learn English. Cultural ghettos that otherwise would gradually be absorbed into the surrounding American culture survive and even expand. That is why Miami is now a largely Spanish-speaking city known as "the capital of Latin America."

Second, the arrival of more people from different cultures tends to sharpen the sense of ethnic difference among native Americans. This in turn weakens the common national identity and the sense of civic solidarity it underpins. Historically, high levels of immigration have stimulated the rise of movements and ideologies emphasizing differences among non-immigrant ethnics. Some such ideologies are separatist (Afrocentrism, Black Nationalism); some stress the equality of cultures (Kallen's "cultural pluralism," today's "diversity"); both are hostile to the notion of a distinctive but encompassing American identity.

The same point can be seen in miniature from the Census. Although everyone recorded by the Census is invited to give an ethnic identity, a minority of respondents stubbornly identify themselves as simply "American." As Peter Brimelow points out in his forthcoming book, however, this tendency to identify oneself as American diminishes sharply wherever immigration introduces or strengthens ethnic diversity. For instance, self-reported Americans constitute a high proportion of respondents in the homogeneous English-origin counties of Maine—but not in those counties that have settlements of French-Canadian immigrants. In periods of little or no immigration, the common national identity asserts itself; in periods of high immigration, it retreats.

The third effect is that high immigration, by juxtaposing American culture to immigrant cultures, makes it

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FOLEY'S LOCAL PROBLEMS

STEPHEN C. MEYER & DAVID K. DEWOLF

SEVERAL commentators have suggested that Tip O'Neill's axiom, "all politics is local," may prove false this year. Yet one of the year's most interesting political races—that between Speaker of the House Tom Foley and Republican challenger George Nethercutt in Washington state's 5th congressional district—suggests no such thing. Local factors still predominate in Spokane and, presumably, elsewhere.

What may prove false is not O'Neill's axiom, but its assumed corollary: "he who brings home the bacon keeps the seat." For years the perceived primacy of local politics has meant, ironically, more federal spending and federal control. This year, however, federal spending and federal control are becoming local issues. Voters have not abandoned local concerns for conservative abstractions. Rather, there is a rising pragmatic perception that the costs of the current pork system are too high, even for its principle beneficiaries.

Among the latter in recent years have been the citizens of eastern Washington. Yet most polls show challenger Nethercutt maintaining a narrow lead over Speaker Foley. Nethercutt has been in front since mid-September, when Foley had his worst primary showing in 30 years. Despite vastly

(Continues on page West-5)

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WEST WORLD

■ Judge Ito is concerned that a book featuring trash, mud-slinging, twisted truth, and dubious motives could hurt O.J. Simpson's chance of getting a fair trial. How could a book on the Huffington–Feinstein race possibly affect the Simpson jurors?

■ California Proposition 187 cuts across political divisions, in and out of California. The measure, which seeks to make it more difficult for illegal aliens to receive taxpayer-funded services such as welfare, medical care, and education, is favored (as of mid-October) two-to-one by California voters. And not just by white Republicans: blacks, Hispanics, labor union members, women, and Democrats show strong support for the idea that people should not be rewarded with public benefits for breaking the law. Still, there are questions that might be raised about the measure, and prominent (non-California) Republicans William Bennett and Jack Kemp have joined the likes of Jesse Jackson in attacking the proposition—for which they have received the grateful thanks of Bill Clinton. Mr. Bennett and Mr. Kemp will no doubt be explaining themselves to a lot of angry Republicans for some time to come.

■ In fact, the number 187 may come to have a special meaning for Mr. Kemp. If he seeks the Republican Presidential nomination, that's about how many votes he's likely to get from California conservatives.

■ Jesse Jackson has already graced California with *his* explanation for opposing Proposition 187. As usual, Mr. Jackson revealed new dimensions to the debate. "Today we're celebrating Columbus Day," he said. "Let's not forget when Columbus landed in America he was considered to be an illegal alien and an undocumented worker." Presumably Columbus came for the free medical care and the welfare check. The public schools back then were not much to brag about.

■ One's shock at hearing Jesse Jackson celebrate Columbus Day pales in comparison with the shock at his candor in revealing the true reason he supports illegal immigration: "The jobs of many minority government employees would be in peril if services to illegal immigrants were slashed." When you combine the bloating of the public bureaucracy with aggressive racial hiring quotas, you have accounted for, say, one out of three people who oppose 187.

■ The City Council of Santa Cruz, California—until just yesterday thought of as "progressive"—voted to abolish Columbus Day, renaming it Indigenous People's Day. Being indigenous people ourselves (born and raised in California, Oregon, etc.) we applaud this gesture of solidarity as a recognition that the number of undocumented immigrants needs to be drastically curtailed. Obviously, this was a way to signal support for Proposition 187. We only wonder what event served as the council members' Damascus Road—er, Pacific Coast Highway.

■ California's budget deficit is expected to reach $3 billion by the middle of 1996, which will give the state government three choices: raise taxes, cut spending, or ask Senator Huffington for a loan.

■ It is not known whether nature or nurture caused Kathleen Brown's bizarre behavior in a televised debate with Governor Pete Wilson. In an obviously rehearsed outburst, she insisted that anyone who could not imagine what it was like for a mother to have a daughter raped or a son robbed should not question her "commitment to be tough on crime." The logic of Brown's argument was explained by staffers later: Her daughter, years ago, had apparently told her mother that, years before, she had been raped by a date. That she announced this to the viewing public, while running for governor of California,

"Tell Mom and Dad what's wrong."

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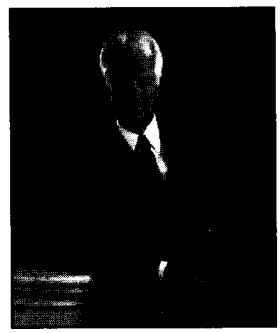

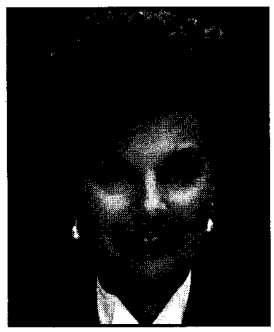

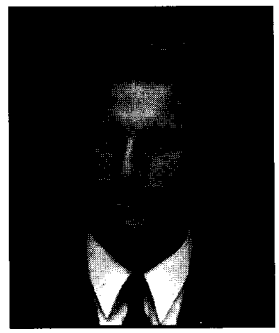

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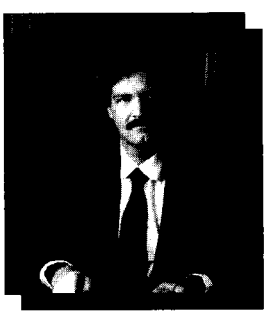

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proves Miss Brown's commitment to law and order. Get it?

■ We disagree with the vast majority of political commentators today who profess to think that "negative advertising" is altogether a bad thing. If a negative ad's point is true and politically significant, we say go for it. Indeed, a truly democratic election without negative advertising is unimaginable. On the other hand, informative positive ads can be a refreshing change of pace. Such a one was a radio spot for Republican Tom McClintock, candidate for California State Controller. "He's just like you, only cheaper," says the narrator in a thick Scottish brogue, with "Scotland the Brave" playing in the background. "He's tighter than a bullfrog's behind. And that, my friends, is watertight."

■ In San Francisco, a federal judge ruled that the gas chamber is inhumane and outlawed it, but inconsiderately failed to specify her preferred method of execution. Perhaps the judge would look more kindly on one of the methods perfected by Death Row's residents: strangulation? multiple stab wounds? shotgun to the head and torso?

■ Non-smokers may soon feel the sting of persecution that has been visited lately on their smoking fellow citizens. Nick Gillespie of *Reason* magazine has chronicled a burgeoning new movement which aims to adopt proven anti-smoking strategies to curtail the use of perfume and other scented products. Switching focus from so-called "second-hand smoke," and based on similarly dubious science, the "anti-fragrance" movement has come up with a condition called "multi-chemical sensitivity," or MCS. To stem the spread of this dread condition, activists seek to create "fragrance-free zones" and ultimately to ban fragrant products. Already they've succeeded in getting their snouts in the federal trough: Congress has funded a major study of MCS, and a housing project for people supposedly afflicted with MCS has been constructed in California's Marin County, with $1.8 million from HUD. Can bans on cologne advertising, class-action suits against the presidents of shampoo companies, and publicly funded ad campaigns portraying deodorant users as dealers-in-death be far behind?

■ In suburban Contra Costa County, east of San Francisco, "concerned" members of the media shake their moussed heads and report that the rate of death by firearms has risen 247 per cent in the past decade while the county's population has grown just 22 per cent. Nobody knows what this statistic means. It sounds like the major and minor premise of a Yogi Berra syllogism. But it must be a symptom of some social pathology or other, and Contra Costa has just the right solution. The Contra Costa Psychological Association is offering three hours of free psychotherapy to anyone who turns in a gun. "There are people who own guns because they are afraid and want to find other means of coping with their fears," said David O'Grady, president of the 110-member association of shrinks. Mr. O'Grady was not subjected to field sobriety tests at the time of the interview. A local police chief did allow that "there are a lot of people who are looking at this as some kind of joke." No kidding.

■ "Shifting alliances, power struggles and raw brutality," a "complex and subtly savage" world. What's that? An analysis of Haitian politics? Observations on Rwanda, Bosnia, Somalia? No, a *Los Angeles Times Magazine* description of seventh grade at Kenilworth Junior High in Petaluma, California, a semi-rural suburb north of San Francisco.

■ We've noted previously that Easterner Ted Turner is the biggest buffalo farmer, ergo buffalo killer, in the West. Perhaps to atone for this capitalist exploitation of things indigenous, TBS aired in October a six-hour documentary about American Indians that resembled a *Saturday Night Live* send-up of PBS's *The American Experience*. One example: it stated outright that the American Founders got their ideas about liberty, not from the Bible, nor from Aristotle or Locke, but from . . . observing Indian life! We doubt it. Consider only what Thomas Jefferson, a Founder famous for his ideas about liberty, wrote of the Indians' treatment of squaws: "[Indian women] are treated to unjust drudgery. This I believe is the case with every barbarous people. With such, force is law. . . . It is civilization alone which replaces women in the enjoyment of their natural liberty." Then again, maybe Ted's confusion explains why Jane Fonda falls asleep during baseball games.

■ Denver airport update: It's November, and the White House lawn maintains the distinction of having landed one more airplane this year than the new Denver International.

■ The Claremont Institute will hold its annual Winston S. Churchill Dinner on December 3 at the Hotel Inter-Continental in Los Angeles. William Bennett, best-selling author of *The Book of Virtues*, will be the main speaker, with William A. Rusher and Pat Sajak serving as Masters of Ceremonies. For information or to make reservations, call the Institute at 909-621-6825.

■ A dispute in which the U.S. Navy accused Stanford University of overcharging for research overhead has been settled, with the Navy agreeing to accept $1.2 million. No word yet on whether the deal included an agreement by Stanford to stop attacking America.

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MEYER
(Continued from page West-1)

outspending his Republican challengers, Foley polled only 35% of the vote under Washington's open primary system—down from 53% two years ago.

SINCE Foley's vulnerability first became apparent he has attempted to shore up his support in the usual ways. He returned west from the nation's capital in mid-October bearing gifts: 33 new police officers courtesy of the crime bill, a building for Washington State University, and a project for Fairchild Air Force Base. Nor does he pass up a chance to remind voters of how he used his Speaker's muscle to save Fairchild from closure. But his current deficit in most polls suggests that voters in eastern Washington are beginning to reckon their support according to new criteria.

First, a more intelligent cost-benefit analysis has been brought to bear in evaluating Foley's record. As in many districts nationwide, the incumbent's support for both the Bush and Clinton tax increases is a bone of great contention. The latter tax hike alone is costing Foley's district $439 million per year or $775 per capita. Even the powerful Speaker is hard put to claim that he can make up for those numbers with pork. To hammer this point home at a recent debate, Nethercutt tore strips from a $20 bill to show how various federal agencies "get their cut" from money sent to D.C.

Foley's prominent support for the crime bill has also proved to be a problem. As Nethercutt has pointed out, although Foley has made a political point of his deliverance of $2.5 million to his district to pay for 33 police officers, the district's pro rata contribution to the crime bill will exceed $45 million. Such figures render the supposedly pragmatic (i.e., non-ideological) pork-and-influence argument hard to justify.

The long-standing assumption that Foley is a "net plus" for the local economy has been questioned for other reasons. He worked hard, for instance, for Clinton-style health care reform. Yet the biggest employer in Spokane (the largest city in Foley's district) is not the air force base he takes credit for saving, but a sophisticated health care industry that serves small population centers between Seattle and Salt Lake City. Local hospitals and treatment centers also service many Canadians who are disenchanted with Canadian health care. This business would dry up, to the great detriment of the Spokane economy, with any sort of federal takeover of the American health care system. Thus for the first time in his career, Foley has lost the support of much of Spokane's heavily medical South Hill community.

Foley also finds himself in trouble with farmers, foresters, and miners over the cost of federal regulation. Wheat farmers in particular have expressed their anger in this respect, questioning in a new way whether Foley's insider influence on their behalf is sufficient compensation.

In addition to this rethinking of costs and benefits, some of Foley's recent behavior has opened him up to the charge of being an inside-the-Beltway elitist who holds the locals in contempt. His decision to use the courts to challenge Washington state's term limits referendum has been especially galling. Ditto his purchase of a $1.2 million house in Washington, D.C. In a district where the average family income just exceeds $25,000 per year, few understand how Foley can call his $171,500 salary "non-commensurate" or why he must maintain a $1.5 million staff. Weekly "De-Foley-ate Congress" rallies in district shopping malls have evidenced an almost unseemly resentment at such apparent abuses of power.

Finally, in a district that voted overwhelmingly for Reagan and Bush in the 1980s and turned out heavily for Perot in 1992, Foley's general left-leaning political philosophy has surfaced as an issue. While in the past the majority has obviously overlooked ideological differences with Foley in exchange for "constituency services," more voters now seem less disposed to do so. In the wake of Foley's well-publicized efforts in the last legislative session to help President Clinton increase federal control over the economy, education, and individual gun ownership, Nethercutt's call for rolling back intrusive statism has struck a responsive cord.

Stephen C. Meyer teaches Philosophy and David K. DeWolf teaches Law at Whitworth College and Gonzaga University, respectively, both in Spokane.

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OVER THE years, Foley has subtly cultivated the perception that his prominence in Washington, D.C., gives eastern Washington state a disproportionate influence on national policy. That message may backfire on him this year. Angry voters have become energized by the prospect of denying President Clinton his prime legislative asset. Nethercutt has repeatedly made the connection explicit: "Beat Foley, beat Clinton," he says. Aware of this, the Speaker was notably absent at a recent rally where the President appeared in support of Washington state Democrats.

Relatedly, Nethercutt has appealed to many Perot voters on the issue of fiscal austerity. He has repeatedly stressed the unusual opportunity the district has to affect the national debate by rejecting the man at the top of the present anti-austere system. In this vein, Nethercutt's first fund-raising breakfast attracted over 1,000 people to eat a symbolic breakfast of Wheaties and skim milk.

Clearly, some of the factors threatening Tom Foley's reelection have an ideological dimension and/or reflect concerns about the national interest. Yet as the federal government grows ever larger, voters can increasingly see connections between ideology, national policy, and local concerns. Adopting a new calculus of voting, many are concluding—even in the Speaker's district—that they can't afford any more federal help. As a result, American politics might just become a good deal more local, not less. □

Regulating the Regulators

ARIZONA'S Proposition 300 is designed to protect private property rights by giving government regulators a taste of their own medicine. It requires that before state agencies may implement new regulations, they must prepare assessments in light of the "takings clauses" in the U.S. and Arizona Constitutions. These assessments must consider the effect of the regulation on the use or value of private property, available alternatives, and the likely cost and budgetary source of any mandated compensation to property owners. Proposition 300 also sets out criteria for regulations that have takings implications, including a requirement of a close nexus and proportionality between the problem to be addressed and the burden on the property owner. Except in emergencies, agencies must submit these assessments to the governor and a joint legislative budget committee before implementing regulations.

Proposition 300 is consistent with recent Supreme Court decisions recognizing that government may "take" property not only through formal eminent domain proceedings, but also through regulations that leave private citizens as owners while substantially diminishing their property's value or restricting its permissible uses. Government agencies frequently seize property through costless regulation rather than compensated condemnation; for example, they may require dedication of private property for public bicycle paths or greenways as a condition to the grant of a license or permit for unrelated business operations. The public blithely acquiesces in the individual property owner's forced sacrifice because it receives the benefit of the private land for free. While Proposition 300 may curb this at the state level, it unfortunately does not check municipal zoning commissions and other local governmental bodies that may commit even more such takings. Even if Proposition 300 passes, further legislation will be needed.

The Republican-controlled legislature passed Proposition 300 in 1992 and Republican Governor Symington signed it into law. It was sidetracked, however, when opponents collected enough signatures to force it onto the general election ballot. It enjoys the support of such organizations as the Arizona Chamber of Commerce, the Arizona Association of Realtors, and the Arizona Farm Bureau Federation. Local hero Barry Goldwater shocked Arizonans on both sides by opposing Proposition 300 at first, only to announce a change of heart after further reflection.

Common Cause, the Sierra Club, and other left-liberal environmentalist and public-safety-through-government-oppression groups have rallied the opposition, resorting to wild claims that Proposition 300 represents a plot to subsidize polluting industries and gut regulation of food handling, day-care facilities, etc. They are joined by former Arizona Governor and current Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, who apparently sees constitutional property rights as a threat to some of his pet environmental projects. Democrat gubernatorial candidate Eddie Basha also opposes the ballot measure, albeit in his characteristically waffling manner, citing the increased administrative costs.

PROPOSITION 300 no doubt will cost the government money. The *Arizona Republic* (which has opposed it all along) recently ran a front-page article claiming that compliance would cost the Arizona Game and Fish Department alone as much as $10 million per year. While such estimates clearly represent the Chicken Little exaggerations of irritated bureaucrats, one can easily see takings assessments as the next cottage industry for underemployed government workers.

Nevertheless, the cost to the public treasury of takings assessments may be a bitter tonic. Shifting costs from the property owner to the would-be regulators may prompt the public and elected officials to examine more closely whether regulation is required in the first place, and end up lowering government costs by obviating compensation for unwise or abusive takings. Even if that does not happen, Proposition 300 may chill some regulation by tying up bureaucratic functionaries in red tape. Libertarian gubernatorial candidate John Buttrick urges voters to "hold your nose, cross your fingers, pray, and vote yes" on Proposition 300. In the hope that government gridlock may prove a bulwark of public liberty, Arizonans would be well-advised to heed his counsel.

—BENNETT EVAN COOPER

Bennett Evan Cooper is an attorney in Phoenix.

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"Can't We All Just Get A Lot?"

THE KING'S COUNSELORS

EDWARD J. ERLER

THE final comic acts of the Rodney King drama are unfolding in Los Angeles. The comedy is surely unintended. But it is difficult to imagine that even the comic genius of Aristophanes could improve upon it.

Rodney King—so routinely described by the press as "*motorist* Rodney King" that the term "motorist" has become a part of the popular American lexicon as a euphemism for "career criminal"—was awarded $3.8 million by a jury in his civil rights lawsuit. Now, not to be outdone, King's attorneys have submitted their legal bills to the city of Los Angeles, to the tune of $4.4 million.

Some of the items on the bill are rather curious, not to say bizarre. For example, King's attorneys are asking to be paid for the time they spent holding news conferences and appearing on the Oprah Winfrey and Phil Donahue shows. And in an astounding display of chutzpah, they are also asking to be reimbursed for expenses incurred in traveling to Oakland for the premiere of Spike Lee's *Malcolm X*, including charges for the three hours spent in the theater. One experienced civil rights attorney, whom the *Los Angeles Times* describes as having "made a career out of suing law enforcement agencies on behalf of beating victims," characterizes the bill as "a bit inflated." A bit? But there is more!

"There's a lot of blood, sweat, and tears between the lines of these fee motions," said one of King's lawyers. "I only wish that I could be compensated for the emotional effort I put in [sic] the Rodney King case. . . The case took over my life." Clearly, in this attorney's mind, the emotional beating he took as King's legal representative was at least as valuable as the beating King himself took. But this is not all!

Also included in the potpourri of legal fees are expenses paid to a tutor hired to instruct Rodney King in African-American history and culture. This was necessary, the lawyers claim, to make King a more attractive public figure. The public (and potential jurors) would no doubt be impressed by King's newfound erudition. This particular gambit failed, however, when public outrage forced King's public-relations managers to cancel a planned public school lecture tour. It gets better!

Tutoring was also necessary for King to develop a sense of self-esteem. A sense of self-worth had always eluded him, and this was, no doubt, partly responsible for his turning to a life of crime. In the words of one of King's attorneys, "It was important for me to help give him a sense of his own self-worth, to help him gain some self-esteem and appreciation of who he was and what King has meant to people." There is more!

Federal civil rights laws provide for payment of legal fees to attorneys who prevail in civil rights suits. The original reason for this was the untenable assumption that such cases would be so unpopular that attorneys would be reluctant to take them. The provision of legal fees would therefore serve as a financial incentive. Some cynics have described this as a "full-employment bill for lawyers." In any case, Rodney King had no trouble finding a lawyer to represent him. In fact, no sooner had the famous videotape been aired than attorneys were circling him like jackals at the first smell of blood. Indeed, representatives of the city of Los Angeles have argued that King's attorneys should receive no compensation from public funds at all—that the King case is an exception because it was always attractive to attorneys in light of the great likelihood of a lucrative settlement.

Rebutting this argument, one of King's lawyers insists that King was in truth an unattractive client, being an ex-felon who had contributed to his own beating by being arrested after a drunken high-speed chase. "This was not a slam dunk," he told the press.

THIS drama will be played out in the Federal Court of U.S. District Judge John G. Davies, who heard King's civil rights case. Whatever the decision with respect to compensation for the attorneys, the result will remain the same: a career criminal who, by one of his own attorneys' admission, contributed to his own beating, has become a multi-millionaire. Two police officers who have led exemplary lives have been sentenced to 30 months in prison for a momentary lapse in judgment about how best to enforce the law—in Judge Davies' words, a nineteen-second departure from departmental procedures—in a highly dangerous and ambiguous situation. And as if to compound the comedy, a federal court of appeals—on petition by the Clinton administration—has recently declared that the officers' sentences were too lenient and should be increased. □

Edward J. Erler is a member of the California Advisory Commission on Civil Rights.

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Liberal Slings and Illiberal Arrows

OVER the course of my husband's U.S. Senate campaign, I have come to discover that negative press has its advantages. The other day, for example, my daughters asked me to read them a tale about the Wicked Witch of the West. Rather than scour the children's library shelves for the appropriate storybook, I simply picked up the paper, read them the latest that *Vanity Fair* and *Time* had to say about me, and showed them Garry Trudeau's most recent illustrations in *Doonesbury*.

I am thankful that my children are still at an age when they disdain the liberal media establishment's op-ed pages in favor of Pat the Bunny and the Little Mermaid. If they had been older, say teenagers, how could I explain to girls at the threshold of womanhood why a Democratic wife who campaigns for her husband is "devoted"—while a Republican wife who's out on the trail is "power hungry"? How could I help them understand why a Democratic wife who advocates volunteerism is a compassionate champion of the needy—while a Republican wife who does the same is "New Age" and out of touch?

But more than anything else, I am thankful that I do not yet have to explain to my two daughters why the mere thought of their father as California's next senator has some liberal pundits calling for murder.

In my many years of reading the *New York Times*, I've been sometimes appalled and more often amused by the liberal clichés that pass for conventional wisdom in its editorial pages. But I cannot recall an occasion where a newspaper columnist called for the assassination of a political candidate and his wife, as Frank Rich did in his October 6 op-ed.

"Mr. Huffington's real cinematic archetype may be found in *The Manchurian Candidate*," wrote Mr. Rich, "the terrifying 1962 thriller about a Joe McCarthy-like Senator with Presidential ambitions who turns out to be merely the puppet of a wife (the pre-lovable Angela Lansbury) with a radical agenda of her own." His thesis, apparently, is that Mike Huffington is somehow controlled by my own secret plan for taking over America.

When I read this description my first reaction was uproarious laughter. I invite Mr. Rich to the Huffington household any morning he's free around breakfast time to do a little investigative research. What he'll find is that, like most wives, I have a hard enough time getting my husband to put his socks in the hamper—let alone carry out my supposedly nefarious agenda for the Republic!

Had Mr. Rich stopped at merely making sexist assumptions about the inherent danger of wives who write books, I would have laughed it off, as I have done so many times before. But he did not. "If their candidacy is true to its Hollywood scenario," reads the last line of his column, "it will take a last-reel miracle to prevent Californians from waking up on Nov. 9 to discover that they are card-carrying members of the Ministry of Light."

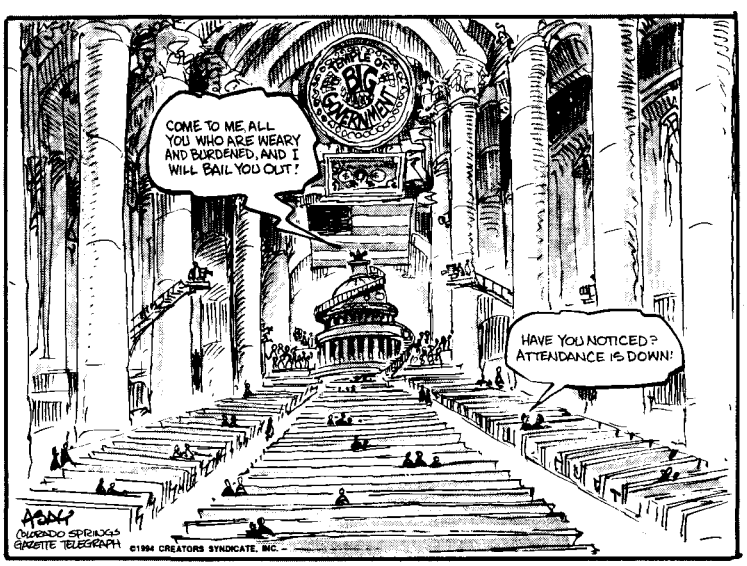
For those who haven't seen the movie, the "last-reel miracle" in *The Manchurian Candidate* occurs when the candidate and his wife—metaphorically my husband and myself—are both shot through the head by a sniper. I do not know what possible explanation of Mr. Rich's conclusion I could offer my children other than that their parents should be taken out by a high powered rifle.

WHY IS the threat posed by a Western Republican Senate candidate so ominous that it warrants a concerted string of calumnious hit pieces by the ideological underwriters of the Eastern establishment? Moreover, what is it that would cause a *New York Times* columnist to escalate political disagreement into a call for political assassination? The motivation must go beyond the personal or even the conventionally partisan, involving a rabid fear and loathing more fitting to a backward country like Haiti than to the greatest democracy in history.

The fact is that my husband's campaign has unabashedly, unapologetically attempted to move important questions about the role of the federal government in our lives and the role of God in our public square to the center of political debate. It has drawn a line in the sand, explicitly asking Californian voters to render a decision on whether they want to continue in the way of a radically secular, government-based society—considering all that that has wrought—or move forward to return true authority and decision-making power to states and, even more, to individuals in local communities.

This choice, in and of itself, is an outrage to the Frank Riches of this world. Because, as Ronald Reagan might have put it, it's a choice which sooner or later will leave them standing on the wrong side of history.

—ARIANNA HUFFINGTON


COME TO ME ALL YOU WHO ARE WEARY AND BURDENED, AND I WILL BAIL YOU OUT!
THE BIG GOVERNMENT
HAVE YOU NOTICED? ATTENDANCE IS DOWN!
ADAMS
ORLANDO SENTINEL GAZETTE TELEGRAPH
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Arianna Huffington's most recent book is The Fourth Instinct..

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seem arbitrary, irrational, and even oppressive. After all, much of culture consists of rules, conventions, habits, and practices that are taken for granted; they are, quite literally, the common sense of the community, and people would be understandably baffled if they were asked to justify them rationally from first principles. When immigrants arrive in large numbers from cultures that stress different rules and even disregard those embodied in American culture, this reduces the status of American culture. It becomes merely the "Anglo" culture, whose rules, standards, and conventions are thought to be alien to non-Anglo citizens and hence cannot be "imposed" on them. And, paradoxically, because tolerance is such a strong component of Anglo-American culture, Americans are much more vulnerable to this cultural sapping than, say, the French.

In his *Atlantic Monthly* article on the effects of immigration on the small town of Wausau, Wisconsin, Roy Beck gives a startling example of this. Immigrant Hmong girls in Wausau schools have a high rate of under-age pregnancy. But no action has been taken or contemplated because the school authorities feel that early parenthood is part of Hmong "culture." It scarcely matters whether or not this judgment is correct; what the story illustrates is the nervousness of American culture faced with what it believes to be cultural diversity. Even on so painful a question as sex with minors, it hesitates to assert its own standards. Those standards will consequently tend to fall into disuse. And because Americans cannot enforce them upon immigrants, they will tend to enforce them less upon themselves. They will, indeed, increasingly come to see them not as self-evidently right, not as "common sense," but as merely the customs of a tribe, to be accepted or rejected by conscious, rational political choice.

Increasingly, we thread our way through a legal minefield. Over a dozen states now have laws allowing the religious use of the drug peyote by those who can demonstrate that they are in part of "Native American" ancestry. Such laws are almost certainly unconstitutional. But they illustrate that the greater the diversity of cultures, the fewer the customs of American culture we feel entitled to insist are valid for all citizens. We gradually drift in the direction of a polity in which only a few abstract legal rules unite a variety of peoples who, culturally speaking, live in different worlds. America is then, indeed, reduced to an "idea."

But not necessarily a very bright idea. The evidence of our senses is that areas with a high concentration of immigrants tend also to be areas of ethnic conflict: Los Angeles, Miami, Adams-Morgan, Crown Heights. That is not to say that immigrants are responsible for such violence; very often they are the victims of it. But it tends to confirm that immigration fosters conditions in which ethnic cultures thrive, the sense of national solidarity is weakened, and the rules and conventions that order our lives (i.e., the common culture) fall into disuse. The resulting society is likely to be one in which conflict is endemic and occasionally violent.

Notice I am *not* saying that a multiethnic society is doomed to conflict and disintegration (although it will doubtless have more temptations in that direction than an ethnically homogeneous nation). What I am saying is that a multiethnic society can succeed only if it is also a monocultural society. Indeed, a multicultural society, like a universal nation, is a contradiction in terms. A society without a common culture is not a society at all. And a society with high and continuing immigration will gradually cease to enjoy a common culture.

On this conservative analysis, therefore, strengthening America's threatened national identity requires some restrictions on immigration. But there is a strong school of conservatives and libertarians who favor mass immigration on grounds of principle, some even supporting open borders, and who remain faithful to America as an idea. Significantly, in their statement supporting continued high levels of immigration, Mr. Kemp and Mr. Bennett give voice to an extremely pure version of this theory: "The American national identity is not based on ethnicity, or race, or national origin, or religion. The American national identity is based on a creed, on a set of principles and ideas." Hence a serious dispute between conservatives has opened up. Let us therefore examine why some conservatives favor mass immigration.

Is Immigration Necessary?

THEIR FIRST argument is that America needs immigrants for its continued prosperity because, not to put too fine a point on it, Americans can't hack it. Two familiar stereotypes are wheeled out to support this point. There is the hard-working, low-paid immigrant who drives a taxi, or washes the dishes in your local ethnic restaurant, or looks after Zoë Baird's children. Without him, it is said, our dirty jobs just wouldn't get done. Second, there is the Indian computer technologist in Silicon Valley whose children win all the mathematics competitions.

Now, both these groups exist, and I am happy to acknowledge their contribution to our lives and prosperity. I am certainly not anti-immigrant, being an immigrant myself. Indeed, it is a calumny to describe those of us who believe current immigration policy is damaging to U.S. interests as "anti-immigrant," just as it would be an equal and opposite calumny if I were to describe advocates of open immigration as "anti-American."

Anyone who has been to the Middle East will find very familiar the idea that we can bring immigrant serfs in to do our dirty work and hire immigrant experts to run the higher reaches of industry. What is being unconsciously proposed here is the "Saudianization" of the American economy. The proposal is based, of course, upon a confident assumption that, unlike the Saudi case, the newcomers will become Americans in short order. That is far from certain, however, in a welfare economy and a multicultural society. And if immigrants and Americans remain foreigners to one another, the serfs may not be willing to do the dirty work indefinitely; nor may Americans be content that the better jobs go disproportionately to "model minorities." In

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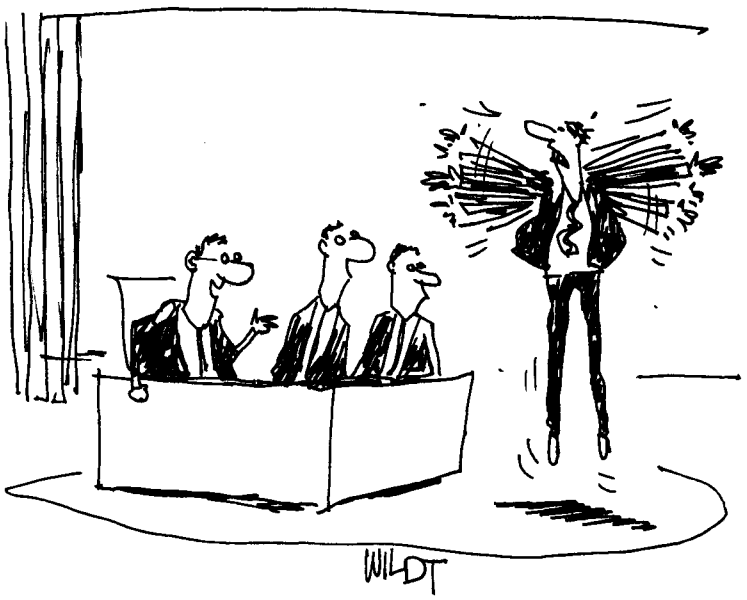
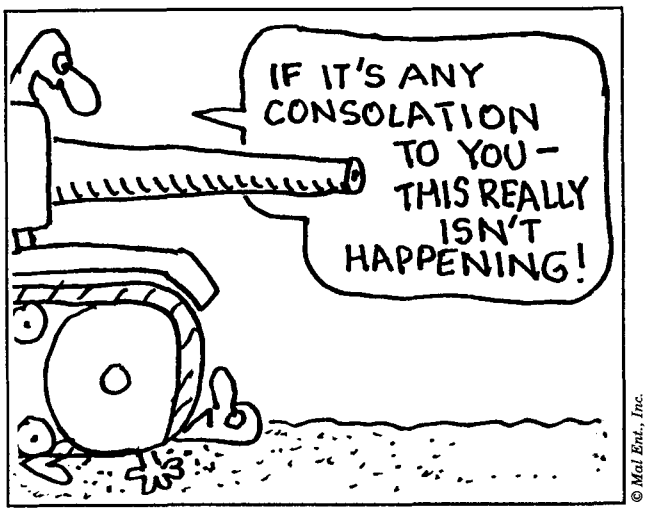
help



"You see, boys? It's that 'can do' spirit that makes Ed a real winner!"

"And now, in keeping with this church's equal time policy . . ."



"A quark goes into a bar . . . at the same time, it comes out!"

Glorobots

Said a robot who never pulls punches,
"It is one of my gloomier hunches
I descended from brutes
In Brooks Brothers suits
Who watered at martini lunches."

GLORIA A. MAXSON

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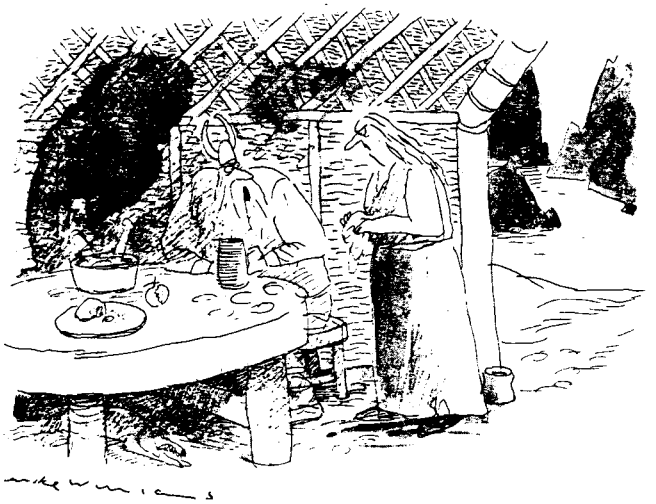
short, Saudianization may not be a long-term practical proposition even for the estimated 6 million Saudis; it is sheer fantasy as a solution for 260 million Americans.

What the "Saudianization" impulse reveals, moreover, is that many Americans now feel a sense of despair about ever getting effective reform of our educational and other institutions. Such despair is unnecessary (although the deeper that despair, the less likely the reform). It also reveals a willingness to discard poorer and less-skilled Americans in favor of marginally harder-working foreigners. That suggests a yet more profound despair about America, because it is a despair about Americans as such rather than about their institutions. It therefore implies a weakening of the common bonds of nationhood across lines of class and race that conservatives in particular should find disturbing.



"For goodness' sake, woman, I'm a Viking! I'm supposed to leave rings on the table."

Now, these risks might conceivably be worth running if the net economic gains to society—to native Americans—from immigration were very substantial. No calculation suggests that they are, and the example of Japan, whose economy has grown rapidly with almost no immigration, establishes in addition that immigration is not necessary to growth.

To begin with, the literature of economic growth assigns a very modest place to infusions of labor. Labor and capital between them never account for more than 50 per cent of increases in income and generally for as little as 10 to 15 per cent. Since immigrants are 10 per cent of the work force, they might in principle produce something like 1 to 2 per cent of extra production. But in fact most immigrants are less skilled than native Americans, and increasingly so. In 1970 the most recent arrivals earned 17 per cent less than Americans; by 1990 that figure had fallen to 32 per cent less—with corresponding increases in welfare participation.

Moreover, not unreasonably, most of that extra production goes to the immigrants themselves in the form of wages. What is the net benefit of immigration to native Americans? That is a more complex calculation. But Professor George Borjas of the University of California at San Diego, himself a Cuban immigrant, estimates the net benefit to be equal to 0.1 per cent of GDP—or $6 billion a year. (We would have to revise that figure substantially upward if we selected immigrants on the basis of higher skills, but we don't.)

If the net economic gains to Americans are small, however, other economic effects are substantial. For the way immigration benefits a society is by causing native wage rates to fall, enabling more labor to be employed and more wealth to be produced for the same wage costs, and transferring the additional wealth to capital and consumers. Professor Borjas estimates that this redistributive effect from lower-paid workers to owners of capital is on the order of $120 billion annually—2 per cent of GDP. That is considerably in excess of the net gain to native Americans as a whole. In fact, immigration probably accounts for about one-third of the relative fall in income of lower-paid workers in the 1980s—a fall that, incidentally, should especially concern conservatives, since it skewed the statistics of income inequality and allowed the Left to claim, falsely but persuasively, that Reaganomics had promoted social division.

In short, immigration is not necessary to economic growth; it has perverse economic and social side effects; and its net benefit to native Americans as a whole is astonishingly small.

Multiculturalism and Welfare

THE SECOND conservative argument is that all the ills subverting America's nationhood are the result not of immigration per se, but of immigration in the context of the welfare state and the nexus of multicultural/bilingual/ethnic-quota official policies.

The short answer: "OK, let's make a deal. You abolish the welfare state and multiculturalism and I'll agree to open borders. Oh, and let's do lunch sometime."

For a longer answer, let us look at history and politics. Even in the now-unimaginably free economy between the Civil War and the New Deal, when both official policy and public opinion favored assimilation, Americans thought that mass immigration was having a divisive effect on the national community and voted to restrict it. Racism doubtless played some part in this. But not all the fears of the people then were groundless. As we have seen, the first version of multiculturalism—cultural pluralism—was spawned around the turn of the century as a response to the Second Great Wave of Immigration.

Immigration is not a neutral factor in the maintenance and creation of welfare. It fosters and expands constituencies of the poor, who, not unnaturally, favor the extension of welfare programs from which they benefit. In 1990 the welfare-participation rate of immigrants as a whole was 9.1 per cent; that is, 1.7 percentage points higher than that of Americans as a whole.

Moreover, other things being equal, welfare dependency is higher the more recent the immigrant group. And that has damaging implications. Professor Borjas has calculated that among the immigrants who arrived here prior to 1900, it took some unskilled groups four

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generations to reach American levels of income. Now, the post-1970 immigrant influx is highly skewed to the unskilled. The criteria for admission discriminate in favor of the relatives of those already here. Insofar as these are low-skilled—and only 4 per cent of immigrants today are admitted on the basis of their skills—they will tend to bring in other low-skilled immigrants. And Professor Borjas sees signs that many of them are making no progress toward native-American incomes. Until recently, there was little reason to fear that immigrants would join the underclass in large numbers or stay there for long periods. We can no longer be so confident.

Similarly, the justification of, and drive for, multiculturalism would be much weaker if there were not large numbers of immigrants from a variety of cultures providing the cannon fodder for the multiculturalists in academia, the bureaucracy, and organizations like La Raza. The fact that immigrants often dislike multiculturalism (as indeed they also, in opinion polls, oppose high levels of new immigration) and that organizations like La Raza do not necessarily represent their views is, for practical purposes, irrelevant. The mere existence of a large and growing immigrant population makes multiculturalism plausible to politicians, bureaucrats, and the public. The bureaucracy treats La Raza and the rest as representatives of immigrants, even to the point of coercing individual immigrants and their children to participate in bilingual programs of which the lobbies approve. The immigrants themselves often vote for the liberal politicians whom the organizations portray as the immigrants' friends. That is enough.

The net effect is that immigration serves to enhance the welfare state and multicultural policies. These would be easier to dismantle if immigration were reduced. And controlling immigration is, anyway, more popular and thus more politically practicable than ending welfare. Of course, ending welfare occurs regularly in Congress—but without practical effect outside.

Traditional Values

THE THIRD conservative argument for immigration is that immigrants are the bearers of conservative values—hard work, family stability, and initiative—and so they are in a sense more culturally "American" than are, say, the decadent descendants of the WASP elite. Indeed, the problem is that "we" corrupt "them." This view is put by conservatives as various as Ralph Reed and Francis Fukuyama. It clearly contains a kernel of truth, but it is based upon an extremely thin notion of what constitutes a culture.

"Traditional values" are certainly a component of "Americanism." But there are also history, language, customs, agreed methods of settling disputes, songs, tales, poems, collective memory, loyalties, and allegiances. In this respect, the immigrant is not an American, and if he arrives in a context of multiculturalism, he may never become one. Nor may his children.

Secondly, as Mr. Fukuyama concedes in his fair-minded essay in *Commentary*, most immigrant groups, once they have been in America for any length of time, begin to show higher rates of welfare dependency, illegitimacy, family breakdown, and so on. He cites some qualifications of this gloomy thesis. But they are not very encouraging. He points out, for instance, that if you remove Puerto Ricans from the calculations, Latino family structure is much closer to the white norm. Unfortunately, he goes on to concede that this is partly because Puerto Ricans, as quasi-citizens, were able to go on welfare at a very early stage. Now that court decisions have extended such benefits to new arrivals, including illegal immigrants, other immigrants may be expected to be corrupted too. Indeed, those immigrants who arrive here as political refugees with an immediate right to welfare do show higher rates of welfare participation than immigrants as a whole.

True, there are immigrant groups that tend to do well and never fall into the underclass. Mr. Fukuyama cites some Asian groups (although others, like Cambodians, have very high rates of welfare dependency). But what follows from the fact that some immigrant groups perform well and others are corrupted into an underclass? Presumably that we should admit the former and exclude the latter. Since we would feel uneasy about selecting among racial and linguistic groups—and rightly so—we might select immigrants on the basis of individual skills. What does not follow is that we should continue admitting immigrants on the present basis.

For if you foster large immigrant ethnic groups that have been corrupted into an underclass and that have never been induced to consider themselves "American" in any broader cultural or ethnic sense, then you risk creating several underclasses that are alienated in the most literal sense of the term. That is, they consider themselves distinct nations within the territory of the United States. The Los Angeles protestors against Proposition 187 marched behind Mexican flags. And because they have a weak sense of allegiance to this nation, they would tend to turn the U.S. into a patchwork quilt of ethnic groups, each with its own claim to government favors and inclined to blame other ethnic groups for their failures. If this sounds alarmist, the L.A. riots, the Crown Heights disturbances, the shooting of innocent passengers on the Long Island Rail Road by a deranged man on racial grounds, and above all the signs that substantial sections of minority opinion, including minority professionals, condone such acts *should* alarm us. For they indicate a weakening of the common bonds of nationhood and their replacement by ethnic loyalties that gain power from hatred of other groups in society.

Issues of Color

THE FOURTH argument is generally heard from liberals, but conservatives raise it too. It goes as follows: It is racist to warn that white Americans may be outnumbered by black and brown Americans by the year 2050, since to do so suggests that you fear or dislike black and brown Americans. But if it is racist

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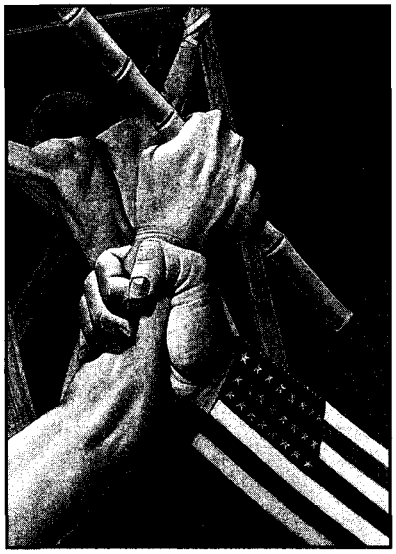

Clinton in Asia

THE WRONG RIGHTS

The Clinton Administration seems not to have learned from the Carter Administration's difficulties that a U.S. crusade for 'human rights' risks pushing our friends into alliance with our enemies.

WILLIAM McGURN

WHEN Michael Fay bent over last May to take four strokes of the cane in Singapore's Queenstown Remedial Prison, he probably did not realize that his gluteus maximus had become the focal point of Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations." It was all over in a few minutes, and Fay was released shortly thereafter. Back home in the U.S., he has been far more modest about his ordeal than many of his champions. "I mean, let's not exaggerate," he told Larry King. "It was like a bloody nose."

At his high point, Michael Fay talked about possibly working for Amnesty International and speaking to Congress on human rights. The intervening months, however, have seen him pushed off the front page into the "people" column, where his butane sniffing and brush with local police have been gleefully chronicled. Yet though Fay himself has receded, the underlying frictions his case brought to the fore—especially those involving U.S. human-rights agitation abroad—continue to irritate and will doubtless become an occasion for further ill will in Jakarta this month at the annual meeting of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum.

What has bothered Asians most about the American reaction to the Fay case is the flagrant double standard. To put the incident in context, last year 46 Korean-Americans were shot, 19 of them fatally, during robbery attempts in Los Angeles County alone. Just before the Fay caning, two 19-year-old Japanese students were gunned down in a San Pedro parking lot during a car jacking. This was followed by a flurry of articles in the U.S. press arguing that the attention lavished on the dead Japanese was unwarranted given that an average of 16 people are murdered in L.A. every weekend. All this has been steady fare for the Asian press, whose readers are left with an impression of American life that has more in common with MTV than with Norman Rockwell.

If the complaints about America were simply the latest whines from the professional Third Worldists, they would be easily dismissed. There are those, too, but today's grumbles about America come from middle-class people who wish America well, and in most ways they are indistinguishable from the complaints made by Bill Bennett in his *Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*. Indeed, Asia's grievance does not stem from the leftist critique; on the contrary, it comes from people who are afraid that American society has accepted that leftist critique and is now bent on exporting it.

With the Evil Empire out of the way, Asia faces no immediate, overwhelming threat to its security. Furthermore, the region's phenomenal economic growth has led its inhabitants to think, not without reason, that they may now have as much to teach the world about rights and priorities as to learn from it. Asians no longer feel that when Washington barks they have to back down. At the same time, they are afraid of American-style chaos. The search for "Asian values" is a reaction against what they see as American individualism run amok.

The APEC Summit

ALL this is about to come to a head again in Indonesia, where Bill Clinton will be attending the APEC summit this month. APEC is hardly the leading organization in the Orient, but last year in Seattle Clinton pushed it hard, if only as a photo op to counter Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's proposal for a grouping that would exclude America. Having made so much of APEC when he was host, Clinton can hardly back away now that it is someone else's turn. This is especially true when that someone else is President Suharto of Indonesia, leader of the world's fourth most populous nation (and largest Muslim one), head of the non-aligned movement, and an important American friend.

Last year's meeting marked the beginning of the end for Clinton's China policy, for it was there that Chinese President Jiang Zemin called his bluff. Although not a single Asian nation supported Clinton's proposed linking of China's trade status with human-rights conditions, at that stage Clinton was still relatively new, and most Asian leaders were eager to paper over the differences and hope for the best. All except Jiang, who gave Clinton a stern talking to at their private meet-

Mr. McGurn is senior editor of the Far Eastern Economic Review.

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Why Is the Catholic Church So Hated?

Let's face it: No one really hates, say, the Methodist or Presbyterian churches, but the Catholic Church *is* hated. As Harvard historian Arthur Schlesinger Sr. noted, prejudice against the Catholic Church is "the deepest bias in the history of the American people." Today it's not acceptable to hate blacks, Jews, homosexuals, et al., but it's O.K. to hate the Church, especially the Pope, as well as Catholics who refuse to be politically correct. Perusing the media makes this amply clear. No, it isn't fair, but then our Lord was hated, so we shouldn't be surprised.

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ing. Several weeks later, during Secretary of State Warren Christopher's trip to Peking, the Chinese followed this up by tossing several dissidents in jail and all but daring Clinton to revoke the country's most-favored-nation status. "It was the worst I had ever seen an American diplomat treated," says a career foreign-service official who was in Peking at the time.

This year the Administration has come full circle on China, with Ron Brown chaperoning U.S. corporate fatcats to the Middle Kingdom to preside over grand contract signings. And after the China debacle, the White House seems keen to avoid a spat with Indonesia. The U.S. embassy in Jakarta has declared that workers' rights will not be brought up at APEC because the forum is inappropriate, and the Commerce Department has been promoting Indonesia as a key site for U.S. investment.

The more sensible the Clinton Administration becomes, alas, the louder the howls from human-rights activists. During the 1992 campaign, candidate Clinton traversed the country attacking the Reagan and Bush Administrations for their foreign-policy cynicism. Yet Clinton's endorsement of a new, rights-based policy opened him up to even more bitter attacks on this score as the realities of life have forced him toward a more temperate stance. Thus, the chief of Amnesty International called human rights the "sacrificial lamb" offered up to trade, and thus, in the run-up to the coming APEC meeting, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have released new reports on human-rights violations in Indonesia, with the specific intent of embarrassing President Clinton into action. Meanwhile, more than 2,500 journalists, about half of them from America, will converge on Indonesia. You can bet that U.S. papers and TV will soon be full of stories from East Timor. Are the Timorese less deserving of democracy than the Haitians? That's probably not the question to ask, but it is the question that *will* be asked.

The Clintonites—like the Carterites before them—have not grasped that they cannot turn these issues on and off at will. While interests are specific and may be argued on a case-by-case basis, a foreign policy based on advancing the abstract rights of man is condemned to universality. If China really doesn't deserve its MFN status, what about countries like Indonesia and Libya? If American GIs are required in Haiti, why not in Cuba, Bosnia, or even Somalia? If workers' rights are an issue in GATT, why won't they be raised inside APEC?

Idealism vs. Realpolitik

THE pursuit of U.S. interests should be guided and tempered by certain ideals; a French-style *Realpolitik* is simply incompatible with the American temperament, however much it might advance American interests. But while compromise in the pursuit of hard interests represents the natural give and take of diplomacy, once a nation's diplomacy is grounded in the legislation and enforcement of universal rights, that same compromise must inevitably be treated as a cynical sellout.

Asia is not blind to the threat a human-rights based American Administration poses. In March 1993, representatives of some forty Asian nations from Singapore to Iran gathered in Bangkok to prepare for the UN-sponsored World Conference on Human Rights that would take place that June in Vienna. They came to put forward an "Asian concept" of human rights that would neutralize the final statement expected from Vienna. Although the Bangkok Declaration reaffirmed support for the "universality, objectivity, and non-selectivity of human rights," it went on to say that their application "must be considered in the context of . . . national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural, and religious backgrounds." Development was found to be an "inalienable right," and nations were warned against using "human rights as a conditionality for extending development assistance." The subtext was that developing countries have the right to taxpayer dollars from the West without conditions.

If the declaration itself was predictable, so too was the reaction. Delegates found themselves blasted as apologists for dictatorship, and with China, Burma, and Iran on the drafting committee, the critics had a point. There was no shortage of defenders, though, and they performed their task loudly and without a trace of irony. Asked about forced labor in his country, U Win Mar, head of the Burmese delegation, replied: "We are proud and honored to do this [work]. . . . If reason prevails, I think there will be a consensus on human rights in Asia, and this is different from the Western idea."

But the important point about the Bangkok Declaration is not that a few thuggish countries would welcome terms designed to mute opposition to their regimes. The important point is that many countries of a more moderate stripe felt it necessary to endorse those terms—indeed, there was no dissent from any of the 49 nations that sent delegates. Apart from their worries that U.S. good intentions may bring about chaos, many see in the push for human rights the new face of protectionism. Although they are wrong to attribute the Clinton Administration's policy to such a crass mo-

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tive, there is indeed a de facto alliance between human-rights advocates and powerful U.S. vested interests such as organized labor.

It makes it all the more confusing that much of the West's human-rights agenda these days is profoundly anti-Western in many of its key assumptions. When most people hear "human rights," they think of freedom from torture, the right to practice one's religion, the right to a fair trial, and so on. In essence, they think of the civil and political freedoms enshrined in America's Constitution, especially its Bill of Rights. Yet the agenda of the rights community extends far beyond a few limits on government. In fact, in many cases human-rights activists seek to expand government in a way that few save the wealthiest nations could afford. When I put this to the Hong Kong representative of a leading human-rights organization, he gave me the Humpty Dumpty answer: rights mean whatever we want them to mean; they have no fixed definition.

Proliferation of Rights

THIS, of course, opens the door to all sorts of mischief. Consider the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the granddaddy of all such agreements. Much of it echoes the language of America's founding documents, protecting life, liberty, and property. But much of it is warmed-over New Dealism, guaranteeing everything from a "right" to Social Security and leisure to a right to a "free" and "compulsory" education. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. has observed that "the Universal Declaration of Human Rights included both 'civil and political' rights and 'economic, social, and cultural rights,' the second category designed to please the states that denied their subjects the first." Far from establishing a minimal standard of behavior we might expect from civilized nations, the Universal Declaration muddied the waters by broadening "human rights" to include almost anything someone might want.

In recent years these "rights" have multiplied, yielding an International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and another on Economic, Cultural, and Social Rights; the Convention against Torture; the Convention on the Elimination of All Discrimination against Women; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Convention on the Status of Refugees; the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity; the ILO Conventions; the UN Declaration of the Rights of Minorities; and the new rights discovered at the 1992 UN Earth Summit in Rio and the 1994 UN Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. Many of the aims endorsed by these documents are unobjectionable as aspirations. But elevated to entitlements, they only encourage the greatest scourge of human rights in the developed world: big government.

Even non-governmental organizations seem to have accepted many of these dubious assumptions about human rights. In Bangkok, while the 49 national delegations were drafting their document, the NGOs offered their own declaration, which would bankrupt and throw into chaos any country foolish enough to try implementing it. Not only does the NGO Declaration call for Asian governments to ratify all the aforementioned covenants and protocols, it calls for the establishment of new international bureaucracies to monitor compliance.

Asian nations have reacted to this anti-growth, anti-development agenda with fury. As usual, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia has been among the most colorful opposition voices. In January 1992, after several foreigners chained themselves to cranes and barges loading logs in Sarawak, he accused them of "advocating that forest dwellers remain in the forest, eating monkeys and suffering from all kind of diseases." As for the idea that such forests properly belong to mankind, Mahathir noted that four-fifths of the world's greenhouse gases are emitted by developed countries. He said he'd be happy to retain the tropical forests that absorb these gases if the West paid for the service.

Labor rights have provoked even more animosity. Singapore's Goh Chok Tong spoke for many when he excoriated the recent attempts to introduce social clauses on workers' rights and minimum-wage laws into GATT as "betraying the West's fear of competition and its growing sense of economic insecurity." Indian Finance Minister Manmohan Singh—the man responsible for

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dismantling India's socialist raj—suggests that the focus on rights may be nothing more than an attempt to advance a "new protectionist agenda."

Nor has Asia hesitated to translate its dissent into outright opposition. When the Clinton Administration attempted to maintain a ban on trade with Burma during the most recent gathering of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, it was decisively rebuffed. Since then a parade of ministers has been making its way to Rangoon, beginning with Prime Minister Goh. Then there is China. China has a long way to go before it is worthy of admission to the ranks of civilized nations, but it is at least moving in the right direction by opening up its economy. Yet today China finds itself condemned by the same people who offered only praise at the height of the Cultural Revolution. The switch in attitude suggests that what really bothers the critics is not so much the absence of long-denied civic freedoms as the expansion of economic freedoms.

Dangers Ahead

THIS YEAR Mr. Clinton comes to Asia with his tail between his legs. But Asian leaders are kidding themselves if they believe that the Clinton Administration's embarrassing retreat on MFN means that the U.S. has suddenly lost its missionary zeal. It is a fact of the American character, and wise is the President who knows how to satisfy these idealistic impulses while advancing U.S. interests (as Nixon pointed out in his last book, it was a balance that Ronald Reagan managed magnificently). The danger today is not that America finds itself at odds with the outlaws of the world. The danger, as the Bangkok Declaration should have made clear, is that a pursuit of abstract rights with little regard for conditions in the affected nations is bound to backfire, as countries with which America has no grievance are forced to close ranks with avowed American enemies to defend themselves.

If our experience with Fascism and Communism taught us anything, it is that the rights most conducive to peace and prosperity are freedoms *from* government, the sorts of rights that allow independent institutions to thrive. For while mankind's vices are universal, our civilizing influences are particular. And these influences are grounded chiefly in institutions that vary from place to place according to custom and tradition. The weakest link in the old Soviet Bloc was Poland, which benefited from a Roman Catholic Church that had retained its autonomy. The Afghan resistance was bolstered by its strong tribal structure and faith. The Thai monarchy played a stabilizing role during the 1992 bloodshed, and the lively if not totally free press in the Philippines held Marcos accountable even during the worst years.

Asia needs these sorts of institutions, and they are beginning to rise with a growing middle class. In time they will temper Asian governments and foster a sense of genuine community. Against the collective human rights that are so often a part of the international agenda, a right to community rests upon the foundation of private liberty and accountability. The freedom of people to act together, whether through businesses, unions, schools, or churches, goes a long way toward protecting legitimate group interests, without any of the strife that characterizes government attempts to divvy up the pie.

Genuine human rights cannot be legislated or ratified by convention. This is especially true at the international level, where disagreement increases exponentially in relation to the degree of detail sought. But surely we can all tell the difference between South Korea and North Korea, Singapore and Burma, Taiwan and China, Maoist China and Dengist China. An America unable to distinguish between moderately good countries and blatantly bad ones will find itself running up against an unhealthy alliance of the two. Just ask Jimmy. □

Vengeance Is Theirs

MAKING EXCUSES

Betrayed men and battered women get away with murder.

STANTON PEELE

WHAT do you call it when a woman kills her spouse? If the husband had a history of abusing and intimidating her, the homicide may be considered an expression of "battered-woman syndrome." Because of repeated abuse, the theory goes, the battered woman has low self-esteem. Depressed and unmotivated, she is unable to leave her husband. She comes to believe that the only way of extricating herself is to maim or kill him. Even though she is not in immediate danger at the time she strikes back (if she were, she could plead self-defense), promoters of battered-woman syndrome argue that she should be treated leniently.

Now what do you call it when a man kills *his* spouse? For Kenneth Peacock, a trucker in Towson, Maryland, the answer was "manslaughter." Mr. Peacock, who shot his wife in the head after he came home at night to find her in bed with another man, received an 18-month sentence on October 17. Judge Robert E. Cahill sympathized with the perpetrator. "I seriously wonder how many men married five, four years would have the strength to walk away without inflicting some corporal punishment," he remarked. Judge Cahill couldn't think of a situation that would provoke "an uncontrollable rage greater than this: for someone who is happily married to be betrayed in your personal life, when you're out working to support the spouse." The judge almost apologized for sentencing Mr. Peacock: "I am forced to impose a sentence . . . only because I think I must do it to make the system honest."

Law students at the University of Maryland immediately organized protests. Patricia Ireland, director of the National Organization for Women,

Mr. Peele is a fellow of the Lindesmith Center and author of Diseasing of America *(Lexington).*

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promised a national campaign to make sentences tougher for men who kill their wives. "This judge is excusing this behavior by giving this lenient sentence," said Maryland attorney Judith A. Wolfer. "Until judges start treating a homicide of a spouse as any other homicide, men are going to continue to kill their wives with impunity for reasons of jealousy, control, or rage. You name it, they'll use it."

Double Standards

IRONICALLY, Miss Wolfer has been a prominent advocate of the battered-woman defense, which hardly "treat[s] homicide of a spouse as any other homicide." In 1991 she and the group she represents, the House of Ruth, successfully lobbied Maryland Governor William Schaefer to pardon eight women who were serving long sentences for assaulting or killing their husbands (following a similar move by Ohio Governor Richard F. Celeste in December 1990). She and her colleagues presented the governor with dossiers that described abuse allegedly committed by the women's husbands.

Although a woman who kills an abusive husband may seem more sympathetic than a man who kills an unfaithful wife, there are striking parallels between the leniency Miss Wolfer condemns and the leniency she advocates. Both hinge on a spouse's misbehavior and its impact on the defendant's state of mind. Neither is based on an argument of self-defense. Indeed, the homicide often does not immediately follow the provocation. Mr. Peacock shot his wife four hours after chasing away her lover; in the interim, he drank and argued with her. Francine Hughes, whose story inspired the film *The Burning Bed*, set her husband on fire as he slept.

Both the battered woman and the betrayed man have an alternative: they can leave. (Mrs. Hughes, like many battered women, had separated from her husband several times, only to return to him voluntarily.) When the wronged spouse does not simply leave, we are told, it is because he or she has been incapacitated by the circumstances; the battered-woman defense emphasizes the female stereotype of passivity, while the betrayed-man defense emphasizes the male stereotype of jealous rage. Given these similarities, it's not surprising that the attor-

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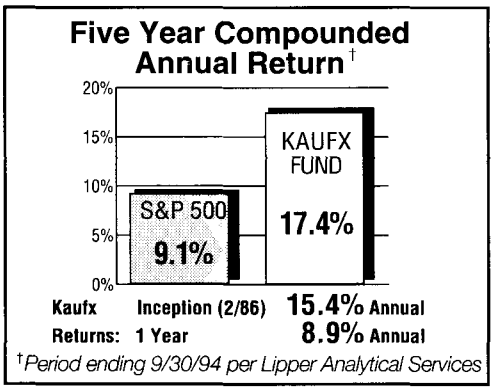

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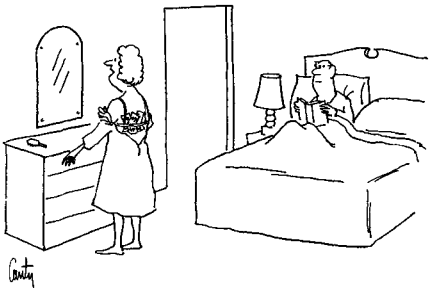

"I must say we girls had a wonderful night on the town."

ney who got Mr. Peacock such a light sentence, David B. Irwin, has been equally successful in representing women who killed their husbands.

One-Time Killers?

CRITICS of both the Maryland and the Ohio pardons argued that the governors heard only information favorable to the prisoners and did not examine the trial transcripts. The *Baltimore Sun* noted that one of the women released in Maryland had hired a hit man and collected on her dead husband's insurance policy. Governor Schaefer responded by describing the emotional testimony of the prisoners he had interviewed, most of whom were not likely to commit additional crimes. But jailed assailants often seem contrite. Judge Cahill had the same impression of Mr. Peacock: "I have no question in my mind that no judge . . . will ever see Kenneth Peacock again," he said. Mr. Peacock had no criminal record, and the prosecutor noted that *Mrs.* Peacock's mother sympathized with her son-in-law.

Maryland Attorney General J. Joseph Curran Jr. criticized the prosecutor, Assistant State's Attorney Michael G. DeHaven, for agreeing to the manslaughter plea. Mr. Curran rejected the notion that men who have found their wives *in flagrante delicto* are justified in killing them. The appropriate response, he said, is divorce. Of course, the same could be said for battered women, but Mr. Curran did not publicly object to Governor Schaefer's pardons in 1991.

Curran argued that Peacock's sentence was based on retrograde thinking. Yet manslaughter pleas are still typical in cases like this one. Stephen Schulhofer, a criminologist at the University of Chicago, says juries "tend to think it is reasonable for men to lose it when they hear about adultery." Modern courts have consistently accepted a wife's adultery as a mitigating factor in homicide cases.

Critics of this practice note that it may invite husbands who kill in cold blood to claim that they lost their heads after learning of their wives' infidelity. The battered-woman defense poses a similar danger. In some cases the women have indeed suffered a long history of egregious abuse. In 1985, for example, New Jersey Governor Tom Kean pardoned Joyce Bunch, who had been sentenced to seven years in prison for the non-fatal shooting of her husband. Over the years her husband's attacks had left her unconscious, disfigured, and in one instance temporarily paralyzed. But Mrs. Bunch's case does not appear to be typical. The *Columbus Dispatch* reported that 15 of the 25 women pardoned by Governor Celeste in 1990 said they had not been physically abused. Six had discussed killing their husbands beforehand, and two had tracked down men from whom they were separated.

Since men are much more likely to kill women than vice versa, feminists should hesitate before broadening the excuses available to murderers. It is tempting to say that a man's outrageous conduct justifies lenient treatment of his wife when she kills him. But the Peacock case shows that such logic cuts both ways. □

Commissioner Kessler's Crackdown

TAKING VITAMINS

The FDA's raids on promoters of dietary supplements seem designed to keep consumers in the dark.

JEFF ELLIOTT

KEN SCOTT is probably the only felon in America convicted for mailing a magazine article. Scott, the owner of Highland Laboratories, a small vitamin company in rural Oregon, was sending free reprints of newspaper and magazine articles to anyone who requested them. These photocopies touted the medical benefits of the coenzyme Q10, an ingredient in a product made by his company. Warned by a Food and Drug Administration inspector that this constituted "labeling," Mr. Scott countered that he was simply reprinting research. Still, he thought it best not to rile the FDA. So he removed his company's name from the literature and contracted with his daughter's direct-mail business to handle the information packets.

That wasn't good enough. An FDA sting operation led to a 1990 raid on his home and business by eleven armed federal marshals, nine FDA agents, and a horde of local and state police officers. Given the time, money, and risk involved in going to trial, Scott decided to cut a deal; he is now serving five years of probation.

He joins a growing number of manufacturers, physicians, and alternative health-care providers raided by the FDA for making, selling, or distributing information about dietary supplements. While the FDA insists it is only protecting the public from dubious "miracle cures," critics charge the agency with trying to suppress any medicines not found in the prescription-drug industry's pharmacopoeia.

FDA Commissioner David Kessler likes to quote a sign that hangs in an FDA district office: THE WATCHDOG IS BACK, it reads, AND IT HAS TEETH. After taking control of the troubled agency in 1991, Kessler placed a new emphasis on "good, old-fashioned, straightforward enforcement." The number of food prosecutions, injunctions, and seizures rose dramatically.

Mr. Elliott is a freelance writer who specializes in science, health, and technology.

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In the FDA's strabismic eyes, a product must be judged as either a food (in which case it must merely contain what it says it contains, and not be poisonous) or a drug (in which case it must meet tests of efficacy as well). But are dietary supplements drugs? Is a tablet of vitamin C a food, like rice, or a drug, like Prozac? According to the agency, it depends on the manufacturer's intent. "The same product could be a food or a drug," says FDA policy spokesman Mitch Zeller. "If I were to sell bran cereal and say that it cures cancer, then it's a drug."

The 1990 Nutritional Labeling and Education Act requires "significant scientific agreement" for health claims on labels. While Zeller considers the requirement "flexible," critics say it is vague and onerous. When Senator Tom Harkin (D., Iowa) pressed Kessler on the question during congressional hearings last year, the commissioner admitted it was "hard to come up with a precise definition" of "significant scientific agreement."

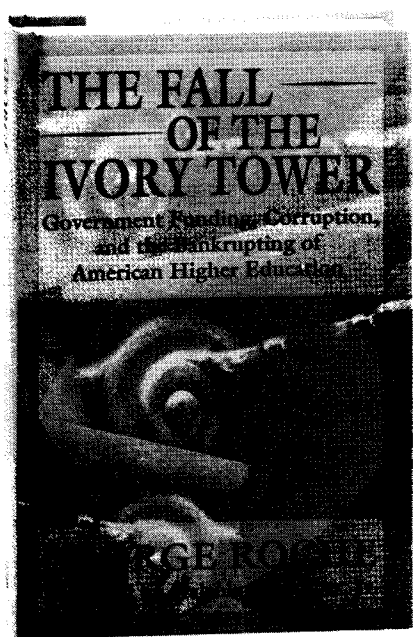
In its entire history, the FDA has approved health claims for only two dietary supplements: calcium and folic acid. Zeller says the agency is currently evaluating the health merits of beta carotene and fiber. Folic acid barely squeaked by last year, on a 6 to 5 vote by the FDA Advisory Committee. Yet the FDA knew about the benefits of folic acid for almost a dozen years before the committee began considering the issue. And in 1991, two years before the committee acted, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control had recommended that pregnant women take folic acid, estimating that the supplement could prevent about 2,500 birth defects annually.

Censoring Health Claims

"IT IS almost impossible to get a health claim through the FDA," Senator Orrin Hatch (R., Utah) complained during last year's congressional hearings. In his closing statement, Senator Hatch attacked Dr. Kessler for the agency's stiff-necked approach. "In your testimony, you refer to the importance of allowing consumers to make informed choices about dietary supplements," he said. "But the only information that you would permit these consumers to have is that white and Asian women might take calcium for osteoporosis. While Harvard Hospital releases a study showing that Vitamin E may help prevent heart disease, a manufacturer or retailer could very easily violate the law, as you are interpreting it, for telling its customers about the study. And that does not make any sense to me, and I am sure it does not to you if you really think about it."

FDA censorship is not limited to dietary supplements. Since 1956, for example, medical studies have reported that low doses of aspirin help to prevent heart attacks. Several companies have applied for permission to market a low-dose aspirin with statements on the label to this effect. Sorry, the FDA replied: since it is intended for the treatment or prevention of disease, low-dose aspirin is a "new drug."

Without the FDA's blessing, manufacturers cannot print anything on their labels beyond a list of ingredients. During a 1992 raid on a Houston



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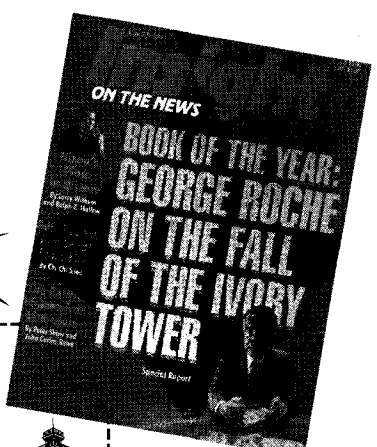

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health-food store, the FDA took more than three hundred different teas and supplements off the shelves. The products included ones with labels that made any sort of health claim ("For Better Vitality," read one bottle) or mentioned a bodily function ("Fat Burner," another label announced).

Such labels were the topic of a 1993 FDA report on health claims the agency deemed unsubstantiated. "The report gives you a flavor of the kinds of claims that are out there," says Zeller. "We're not saying that everything in it is a violation, but everything in it is unsubstantiated."

Senator Hatch blasted the FDA report as "false and misleading," noting that of the 528 products listed, 34 did not exist, 25 were cited more than once, 3 were listed more than once for the same health claim, and 17 had been removed from the marketplace before the report was released. Hatch's staff also found that one of the products was not a dietary supplement but a paperback book.

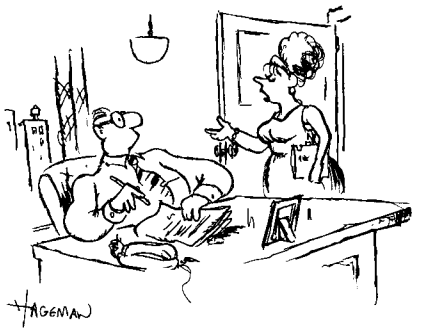
Watchdogs Off the Chain

WHILE some of the claims listed by the FDA were clearly bogus (several products promised "prevention of AIDS"), others seem plausible. For example, the FDA cites the Life Extension Foundation's claim that vitamin C lowers cholesterol and helps prevent heart disease. William Faloon, president of the foundation, notes that these benefits are documented by rigorous studies reported in respected journals such as *Epidemiology*.

In 1987 FDA agents raided the Life Extension Foundation's store in Hollywood, Florida. Rather than wait for the store to open at 11 A.M., they battered in the door and began pulling vitamins off the shelves. The most chilling aspect of this raid was the confiscation of more than five thousand copies of the non-profit organization's newsletter. Mr. Faloon says the FDA also harassed the foundation's printer, threatening to seize his presses if they were used to print any more "illegal" newsletters.

As the FDA sees it, such newsletters are a kind of label. "Any printed material becomes a label when the literature is sent to the same people who buy the products," explains Nancy Lord, an attorney who has represented vitamin providers. "If it starts at the same source and goes to the same destination, it's labeling. People have even been arrested for sending books that were available at any bookstore."

Like many critics, Faloon accuses the FDA of coddling prescription-drug manufacturers and persecuting supplement makers.The big drug companies have their own complaints about the FDA, of course, but they have a cozier relationship with the agency, which is increasingly dependent on their fees for its budget. "The big pharmaceutical companies get a polite letter or phone call when there's a problem with their products," he says. "With alternative-medicine businesses, it's a battering ram on the front door. It's a whole different way of enforcing the law." Faloon cites a recent FDA press release concerning the Blood Bank of Alaska



"Your wife just got back from shopping. She wants you to belt down a few before you get home."

in Anchorage. Although inspectors found "numerous deficiencies in its laboratory operations, donor suitability determinations, and record keeping," the blood bank was given 30 days to submit a plan to correct the problems.

Stephen Levine, director of Nutricology, Inc., makes similar charges. "This is all protectionism for the pharmaceutical industry," he says. "They don't want our industry around." Nutricology was also raided by the FDA and told to cease distributing literature to customers. But unlike other FDA victims, Nutricology had a customer base largely consisting of health professionals. When the case went to trial, Levine had no trouble collecting more than 1,300 affidavits in support of his products, most of them from MDs.

Few vitamin manufacturers can afford a costly legal battle with the FDA, however. Levine says his company has spent almost $1 million in lawyer's fees, and other companies report legal bills in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The government incurs similar costs. Yet in none of these cases is the purity of the product in question; the issue is simply what is printed on a bottle or in a pamphlet. Why squander tax dollars and harass citizens, argue the supplement makers, when there is no threat to the public health?

Former FDA investigator Arthur Evangelista suggests that vitamin companies are easy targets for agents pressured to make busts. "It's a numbers game for funding," he says. "If you couldn't turn out the numbers, they would shut the operation down. There was a quota. If you don't meet your numbers, you don't get promoted. So you get warning letters out, and get embargoes and injunctions against companies. I finally resigned; I thought this was crazy.

"Most of the rank and file have their hearts in the right place, but they're being fed information and being manipulated by Washington or district managers. . . . I can see covert operations and armed raids over someone giving horse steroids to children, but a vitamin company? Come on!"

The reasons for the FDA's choice of targets are often hard to fathom. In 1991, for example, the agency seized two drums of black-currant oil from Traco Laboratories in Champaign, Illinois. The FDA claimed the oil was an unsafe food additive. Denouncing the agency's "Alice in Wonderland approach," a federal judge ruled that the oil was neither unsafe nor a food additive. An appeals court upheld the decision in 1993. Yet less than four months later, the FDA made the same claim in an enforcement report.

Capable of Anything?

GIVEN THE FDA's track record, it's easy to believe it would do just about anything. But not all the charges against it are well-founded. Last year, for example, vitamin makers launched a well-orchestrated campaign warning that the FDA was on the verge of banning simple vitamin supplements as unapproved drugs. Stores put up "STOP THE FDA" banners and provided stationery and stamps for customers to write angry letters to Congress. But the industry claims were false.

The confusion arose largely because of two actions taken by the FDA on June 15, 1993. One action was to re-

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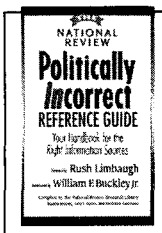

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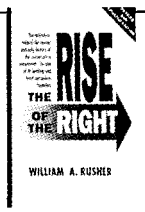

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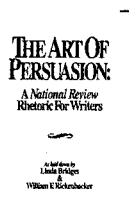

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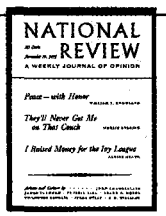

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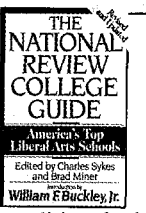
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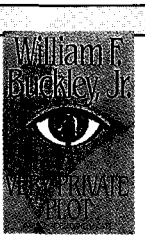

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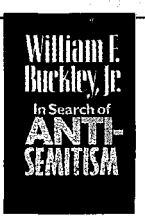

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quest public comment about the possible health risks posed by a handful of herbs and amino acids. The other was to publish new rules for labeling dietary supplements and herbal remedies. These different issues were melded together in the public mind. The mixup grew into a nationwide legend. Messages still appear on the Internet warning that the FDA intends to snatch multivitamins from our medicine cabinets.

Dr. Kessler appeared on Larry King's radio show last December to counter the misinformation, in the process dispensing some of his own. "People think we're going to take dietary supplements off the store shelves," he told Mr. King. "That's not correct. This debate has nothing to do with access to dietary supplements. It has only to do with what can be on the label." Kessler held up a vitamin bottle and recited the list of illnesses mentioned on the label. King asked him if that meant the product could no longer be sold. "No," Kessler replied. "The product will not be removed from the store. But the label has to change."

In New Mexico, Gene S. Oden was astonished by Kessler's remarks. That label was from a product made by his company, International Nutrition, Inc. But Kessler was reading the old version. Any mention of health conditions had been removed in 1991. And concium supplement could not be found in minerals, Oden argued with the FDA agent who had inspected his company all those years. Oden says the agent snapped, "Why don't you go ahead and file for a new-drug application? It's an easy form to fill out."

For Oden and other small manufacturers, that suggestion is a bitter joke. The FDA charges a $150,000 "user fee" per application, a charge that will rise to $233,000 by 1997. And that's just the beginning; there is an annual product and establishment fee of almost $100,000, which also goes up every year. All this for a single health claim. If a company wants to say that its drug is good for other conditions, each additional claim costs $75,000, a surcharge that rises annually. These FDA fees are above and beyond the cost of ushering a drug through clinical trials, which can cost up to $360 million and takes an average of seven years.

So, as a supplement maker, you have three unpalatable choices. You can spend hundreds of millions of dollars on drug trials, then pay hundreds of thousands annually to the FDA. Or you can risk prosecution. Or, of course, you can make no claims and distribute no literature, relying upon word of mouth to publicize the benefits of your product.

Intended or not, this system is an effective mechanism for suppressing public knowledge about dietary supplements. And that can't be healthy. □

The Chinese Diaspora

WEALTH HAZARDS

Overseas Chinese have made crucial contributions to Southeast Asia. But their success has a price.

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amassed great wealth. On the other hand, Indonesian-Chinese live in perpetual fear. Although there have been only a handful of violent outbursts in the last decade, widespread resentment of the visibly foreign element in Indonesia's midst leaves the Chinese uncomfortably dependent on the 71-year-old president for protection.

This pattern is repeated throughout Southeast Asia. The 28 million ethnic Chinese who are scattered across the region are economic miracle workers, making crucial contributions to the rapid development that has characterized Southeast Asia during the last forty years. In most of their adopted countries, the achievements of the ethnic Chinese are out of all proportion to their numbers. In Indonesia, where they are less than 4 per cent of the population, they have 75 per cent of the wealth. In Thailand, Chinese represent 8 per cent of the population but control 80 per cent of the wealth. The numbers are even more amazing in the Philippines: less than 2 per cent and 70 per cent. Even in the backward economies—Burma, Cambodia, and Vietnam—Chinese entrepreneurs are behind the vast majority of private business ventures.

At the same time, however, resentment of their wealth—combined with gnawing questions about their patriotism and religious incongruities—has created undercurrents of tension and self-fulfilling cycles of distrust. For example, Chinese living abroad, nervous about potential confiscation, keep much of their wealth, estimated to be anywhere from $200 billion to $500 billion, hidden outside of the countries where they live, a tremendous lost opportunity (and potential source of contention) for capital-hungry nations.

Divided Loyalties

THE question of divided loyalties is bound to become increasingly pointed as the overseas Chinese invest more of their assets in their mother country. For China, the importance of its rich alumni network cannot be overstated. "China would be nowhere without the overseas Chinese," says Robert Lloyd-George, a Hong Kong–based money manager. He says overseas Chinese account for 80 per cent of the $25 billion in direct foreign investment that has flowed into China since Deng Xiaoping set out to liberalize its economy.

But what is good for China may be troublesome for its offspring. Overseas Chinese have always sent remittances to their relatives in China, but if Southeast Asia's lengthy run of economic growth were to falter in the face of substantial China-bound capital flows—or if overseas-Chinese conglomerates were to set up businesses in China that started competing with older ones elsewhere—simmering animosities could quickly pass the boiling point. Deng's government recognizes the danger. "In public, Peking will reject totally the idea that an overseas Chinese network exists," says one Asian diplomat. "They know that if they said anything, there would be uprisings in Indonesia and Malaysia."

Every Asian businessman has a theory as to why most of the region's wealth ended up in Chinese hands. Not surprisingly, the old truism that

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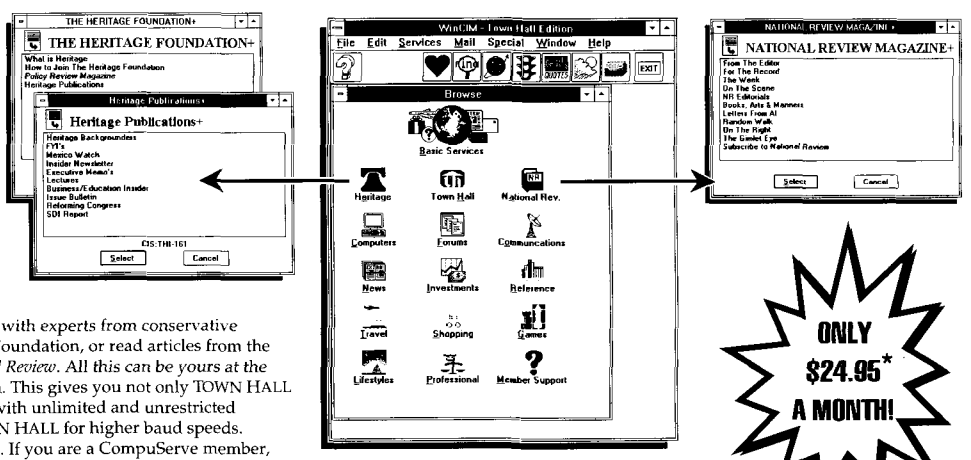

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Chinese work harder than anyone else and that they are instinctively entrepreneurial is the most popular. But Chinese shade the traditional hypothesis somewhat by suggesting that they are simply more single-minded: that they are motivated less by religion and other "abstract" ideas about how life should be led than by the pragmatic imperative of providing for their families. "Entrepreneurship is not the reason. It's the result," says Emil Nguy, an Indonesian-Chinese who is the managing director of Lippo Investments, a large Indonesian company. He nonetheless acknowledges that immigrants are unusually driven.

Significant Chinese emigration began in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Moving to countries that prohibited them from owning agricultural land or holding government jobs, Chinese naturally gravitated toward business. And since there was a limited amount of indigenous commerce in these traditional agricultural societies, the Chinese immigrants—who had relatively sophisticated understandings of trade and mathematics, even though they came from the lowest levels of

Chinese society—were well equipped to fill the void.

Having begun as peddlers and small-shop owners, the most successful Chinese formed commercial alliances that eventually extended throughout Southeast Asia. Reaching out to people with whom they shared a home town or at least a common dialect, they created relationships from which financing, trade partners, and information could be drawn. The partnerships were often reinforced by cross-ownerships and marriages. And although the resulting jumbles of corporations, international joint ventures, and shell companies appear impenetrably complicated, the operations function as seamless multinational business empires.

Symbiotic relationships between Chinese tycoons and indigenous politicians also played a role. Elected officials were willing to grant exclusive import and manufacturing licenses and even tax-collecting concessions to Chinese entrepreneurs, counting on them to advance the goal of economic modernization but confident that they could never convert their commercial strength into political power. Says Paul L. Schulte, First Boston's research director in Hong Kong: "Many of the most successful companies are the result of protected markets and political connections—not real competition." In these primitive economies—in which executive and military power

Thais That Bind

THE difference between Thais and Chinese, I was told, is all in the eyelids: Thai lids have epicanthic folds; Chinese lids do not. But although half of Bangkok's population is thought to be Chinese to some extent, the racial mixing has been so thorough that I could only rarely spot the difference.

Thais and Chinese began with the same ethnic roots. Most Thais descend from people who lived in southwestern China until they were forced southward by the Mongols. And in modern times Thailand has been working to eradicate the remaining ethnic distinctions by encouraging Chinese immigrants to take Thai names, to practice the Thai form of Buddhism, and to intermarry.

Starting in the seventeenth century, Thai kings began to view these immigrants as a commercial middle class that could fill the gap between aristocrats and peasants. With that in mind, Chinese businessmen were granted trading monopolies, and the most successful of them were ennobled. Their daughters married Thai aristocrats, and their sons were allowed to enter civil service, the traditional career path for the kingdom's best and brightest. The goal was to secure from the Chinese the benefits of their business acumen along with their allegiance.

Although no other nation has had anywhere near the same success in integrating Chinese, even the Thai–Chinese relationship has had its rough spots. By the 1930s, Chinese were thought to control about 90 per cent of Thailand's business activity. After a particularly massive wave of Chinese immigration, a feeling that Chinese were too rich and that they were no longer being sufficiently assimilated led to the enactment in the 1940s of several discriminatory laws. During the subsequent two decades, a new source of anti-Chinese sentiment arose: they were thought to be possible Communist agents.

But now that their capitalistic credentials are fully established and assimilation has continued to progress, resentment rarely surfaces. "Whether someone is 25 per cent Chinese, 50 per cent, or even 100 per cent is totally irrelevant," asserts Sarasin Viraphol, the senior official for Asian and American affairs in Thailand's foreign ministry. Ralph Boyce, an American diplomat who served in Bangkok before he moved south to become the deputy chief of mission in the Singapore embassy, says: "There is very little animosity because it is so hard to direct it anywhere."

But even if it is difficult for outsiders to distinguish Thai-Thais from Thai-Chinese, it is generally understood that ethnic Chinese continue to rule the world of commerce, a reality that becomes strikingly apparent during the Chinese New Year celebration, when virtually all of Bangkok's retailers close their doors. *Bangkok Post* editor Paisal Sricharatchanya, whose father still carries a Chinese passport, concedes: "The vast majority of the business community is Chinese, from the top decision makers to the retailers, and that is not changing."

And it is also universally accepted that Thailand would be a very different place without the Chinese. "The Chinese taught Thais about everything from accounting to tax collection," Paisal says. Boyce adds: "When I asked a Thai friend what his country would be like if there were no Chinese, he told me, 'We would be sitting around under trees singing.'"

—G. BRUCE KNECHT

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was substantial, antitrust laws were (and are) non-existent, and corruption was (and to a great extent remains) commonplace—politicians and able Chinese had a lot to offer each other.

But the economic ascendancy of the Chinese, coming as it did generally without parallel improvements in their political or social standing, was unstable. While Chinese have almost blissfully assimilated into Buddhist Thailand (see box), their compatriots in the Muslim nations of Indonesia and Malaysia live as nations apart.

"Most Indonesians see the Chinese as parasites," says Aref Budiman, a Harvard-trained sociologist. "So far it is a controlled hatred, but Suharto could easily release it at any time." Budiman, an Indonesian-Chinese follower of Islam who teaches at Setya Wacma Christian University, says the president's family is increasingly invading the Chinese economic turf with heavy-handed extortion: "One of the president's sons will call a Chinese businessman and say he wants to purchase 10 per cent of his company. The Chinese will not dare to refuse his offer—even though they know that they will never be paid."

The roots of this relationship go back to Indonesia's days as a Dutch colony, when virtually all trade between the Dutch and the indigenous population was conducted through Chinese intermediaries. "The Dutch used the Chinese to bring an understanding of numbers and an ability to organize to what was a primitive society," says a prominent Indonesian-Chinese lawyer. "The Dutch approach has been basically imitated by the current regime."

It is an unnatural relationship in which Indonesian-Chinese are forbidden to use Chinese names and signs, to have Chinese schools, and even to celebrate Chinese New Year. Although they generally do not dare to say so, not surprisingly most Chinese are deeply resentful. A successful banker laments: "Every other ethnic group in Indonesia can talk about their background, but they forced us to give up our culture. What do we have to give to our children?"

Others complain that the the government will not hire Chinese. But they admit that native Indonesians (*pribumis*) rarely hold senior positions in Chinese-owned companies. A director of a large real-estate and agricultural company, himself married to a *pribumi*, says: "It is hard for them to earn our trust. When there is a sensitive issue, we will not talk about it if there is an Indonesian present."

Ethnic tensions in Malaysia, where Chinese represent a relatively large portion of the population (about 20 per cent), have never escalated into riots of the sort that left thousands of Indonesian-Chinese dead in 1965 and 1966. However, ethnicity remains a constant undercurrent in the peninsular nation. During the prolonged debate over the prerogatives of Malaysia's sultans in recent years, it was apparent that the pampered royal families draw much of their strength from a feeling that they are the ultimate protectors of the Malay majority.

Affirmative Action

BOTH Malaysia and Indonesia have worked to enhance the economic standing of their indigenous populations—*bumiputras* in Malaysian (like "pribumi," the term means "men of the earth"). Malaysia's "New Economic Policy" was initiated in 1970 in an attempt to expand *bumiputra* ownership of business enterprises—then estimated at less than 3 per cent—to 30 per cent by 1990. Although the government says the program achieved its goal, many Malay owners are known to be "sleeping partners" whose only role was as fixers.

In Indonesia, the redistribution effort is more personalized. President Suharto began a campaign to expand *pribumi* ownership four years ago by calling the chairmen of 30 of the nation's largest conglomerates (29 of whom were Chinese) to his cattle ranch south of Jakarta. He demanded that they give 5 per cent of their companies to state cooperatives, and his government, too, claims success. But the official incursions have a down side: Chinese tycoons are certain to respond by sending even more of their assets abroad, especially to China.

In turning back to the country they or their ancestors fled, the overseas Chinese are motivated not only by fear but also by pride, along with a growing sense that China has finally become the place of opportunity. Their patriotic pride has been rekindled by China's recent economic progress, and their commercial appetites have been whetted by the belief that their homeland now offers the same kind of raw, unexploited opportunity that they found in their adopted countries.

The overseas Chinese are sending more than money to China. Indeed, says Sin-ming Shaw, who manages several funds that are making direct investments in China from offices in Hong Kong and Shanghai, "the money is not as valuable as the knowledge transfer." Shaw, who was born in Shanghai but received two degrees at Columbia University, says much of his time in China is spent expounding on the importance of contracts, accounting, and the time value of money. "The Chinese can learn from me without losing face," he says. "I can tell them that they're crazy. It wouldn't work if I was a German."

Since the overseas Chinese are becoming the decisive factor in the remaking of China and their companies may well become the nation's biggest enterprises, their past experience may tell us a lot about the future shape of China's economy. The most obvious shortcoming is the dependence on family control: almost all Chinese companies are organized as family businesses, and very few of them have taken the crucial next step of bringing in professional management. That, in combination with a mindset that is tightly focused on the immediate term, may preclude the Chinese from building truly world-class companies. "The overseas Chinese built their fortunes with giant monopolies in things like cement and tobacco," says Lloyd-George. "They think it could be the same in China."

Or, as an Occidental investor who works in Bangkok puts it: "Their whole mentality is a trading mentality. It is still very hard to get them out of trading and into manufacturing, particularly if it requires research and development. If the payback goes beyond three years, they say, 'Let's buy cheaper equipment.'"

And so China, revivified by the overseas Chinese, endowed with an endless supply of cheap labor, but unlikely to have much in the way of fixed investments, will likely become an economy of wily enterprises capable of rapidly responding to changing markets. But while that will move China a long way from where it is now, it will also make it difficult for the world's largest country to grow out of a dependence on low-cost labor. To advance further, China may have to go outside the family. □

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THE VICE PRESIDENT

WASHINGTON

October 31, 1994

Dear Rusty,

Let me run a little puzzle by you: A farmer must choose three crops. One of the crops must be corn. Mung beans and tomatoes cannot be planted in adjacent fields, but alfalfa and mung bean must be planted in adjacent fields. Which seed must the farmer eliminate?

You see, Tip and I have taken an IQ test. Ever since buying that new book by Charles Murray, The Bell Curve, Tip has been obsessed by finding out my IQ. I don't need to know exactly how smart I am. That's why I went to Harvard. But once Tip gets an idea in her head, it's hard to get her to let go. "But Tipper," I said, "don't you think these tests are culturally biased, inconclusive, and basically worthless?"

"That depends," she said.

"On what?"

"On how well you do. Go get a pencil."

The final bargain I struck with her was that I would take a test if she would too. She gave me one of her short little Tipper laughs.

"Of course I'll take one too," she said. "But I have to warn you, it's common knowledge that women score higher on these things than men."

"Really?"

"Absolutely. Just like it's common knowledge that children who go to St. Alban's and National Cathedral are six to eight points more intelligent than children who go to Sidwell Friends. It's all in the data, Al," she said, tapping Murray's book.

The next day, Bill and I headed to the Oval Office for a meeting with Mr. Panetta. Bill was off to the Middle East that afternoon, and I was due in Massachusetts to stump for Ted Kennedy. Mr. Panetta was behind his desk, talking on the phone. After a few seconds, he covered the mouthpiece.

"Look, I'm tied up right now. But before you get on that plane, I just want to say that no matter how repugnant it is to break bread with the man, no matter how low and immoral he may be, remember that to his people, he's like a god. They worship him. And we need him on our side."

Bill and I looked at each other.

"Are you talking about Arafat?" Bill asked.

"Him too," Mr. Panetta said.

I walked Bill down to his office, the old butler's pantry off of the Lincoln Dining Room. "What do you think about The Bell Curve, Bill?" I asked.

He looked a little miffed. "To be honest, Al, I think Donna Shalala is doing a damn fine job and deserves a lot more respect. Sure she's put on a few since taking office. But hey, who hasn't?"

Before I had a chance to explain, he was summoned to Foggy Bottom for a meeting with Dr. Gergen and Strobe Talbott, Ph.D. And I was late.

On the plane, Tipper brought along the IQ tests and we got to work. The first questions were mostly math, which was easy for me but I'm pretty sure I caught Tipper copying from my test.

"Cut it out, Tipper," I said.

"Cut what out?" she asked.

"Eyes on your own paper," I said.

When it came to the word problems, I had some trouble, though I think it had more to do with the faulty wording of some of the questions. For instance, if two cars are traveling on parallel paths at different speeds, the car going more slowly could, if the driver utilized the now-prevalent high-occupancy vehicle lanes, get to its destination sooner. These kinds of loopholes lead me to believe that the critics of Murray's book are right, and that IQ tests are biased, inconclusive, and untrustworthy.

Having said that, I note in passing that I scored a high 149. Tipper seemed pleased.

"You scored higher than her," she said. I knew better than to ask who "her" was.

"I scored higher than HRC?" I asked. "What's her IQ?"

"One thirty-five," Tip said.

"How do you know?"

"She whispered it to me during Bill's Inaugural speech." Sometimes it's hard to tell when Tip is pulling my leg.

Later that day, after a rousing speech, Senator Kennedy and I headed back to the Parker House. "What do you think of The Bell Curve, Senator," I asked.

He looked serious. "On a guy it's not so bad—you get your suits cut a little more roomy, maybe let out the seat. But on a chick—whoa, mama—join a gym, lay off the Pepperidge Farm, do something, 'cause this daddy don't like his ladies chunky. Know what I mean?"

Actually, Rusty, I didn't.

Your pal, Al

PS: I think the farmer should eliminate the mung beans.

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What Killed Regional Difference?

DIGBY ANDERSON

LAST MONDAY I got out of my comfortable bed in England at what would have been midnight on the East Coast of the United States and drove, bleary-eyed, to Heathrow Airport, waited the ritual two hours, then got through the eight-hour flight to New York. British Airways was reliable as usual—the best—but someone should tell them not to show films in which the characters kiss. I was surrounded, as ill luck would have it, by YPs (Young People—under 27) of different nationalities. It has long been a point of controversy whether films and television have effects on YPs. Why it should be controversial I don't know. The couples instantly started kissing and did so repeatedly, even competitively, every time the screen characters kissed. Not a pleasant flight.

That evening at the bar of the Algonquin, over tasteless Amstels (chosen because not quite as tasteless as Budweiser), a friendly soul said it was nice to see me back. "Nice to be back," said I. "Always pleased to be back in America."

"America?" said my friend. "This isn't America. New York isn't America. If you want America you should go to upstate New York."

My geography has never been solid. "You mean Massachusetts?"

"Lord, no. That's very different. Not real America at all."

Now it is somewhat disconcerting, when you have paid for tickets to America, checked into a flight to America, sat through the kissing business, gone through American—as you thought—immigration, to be told you are not there at all. But the point of the story is that Americans genuinely suppose that people across the various parts of the country are different:

"Ooh, those crazy Californians. They're something else."

"What do you expect when you elect a President from Arkansas?"

"Miami, well that's different . . ."

It's not for foreigners to judge, though it may be they see things more clearly than natives. For the record it seems to this foreigner that the different states are becoming more and more similar: everywhere the same tasteless Amstels, same menus, same talk about "the game" on TV, same silly regulations. And worst of all, the same damn Young People dressed identically, using the same silly modern expressions, all kissing in response to the same films.

Mr. Anderson is the editor of The Loss of Virtue *(National Review Books), which has just been released in a paperback version.*

If it is true, then why is it happening, this cultural homogenization? Well, it's happening in Europe, too, and there this foreigner can suggest an explanation. It might apply to the U.S. as well. Let's take the European country that is said to be so different—so different from other European countries, especially from England, and so full of differences within itself: France.

Two memories. One from the early, the other from the late Sixties, both from France. The first: dinner in a professional, bourgeois family. A long table and a long dinner. The food cooked by the maid under the grandmother's supervision. No ostentation, but lots of formality—even, to a young Englishman, a certain coldness. Family members serving themselves in strict order of seniority from a series of courses. Conversations initiated by adults. Simple enough dishes—charcuterie, anchovy pastries, potato and leek soup, artichokes vinaigrette, or *crudités*; followed by a *daube* or other stew, veal, sweetbreads; or *poulet provençale* then a puree of spinach or a salad of endive; five sorts of cheese; fruit or pudding. It lasted an hour or more, and when there were guests, over two. The children said little, left nothing. Lunch started when Papa returned from his office. A handbell was rung in the adjoining library. Dinner was the main event of the evening, starting around 8:30. Everyone was always present. Wine at both meals but in moderation.

The physical details are easy enough to describe but do not convey the settled hierarchies, rather distant relationships, accepted authority combined with quiet appreciation of the good things in life. No Anglo-Saxon table could ever have combined such long silences with liberal smoking between courses. Lots of dignity, quite a lot of rather boring waiting around, but not a suspicion of Puritanism.

The other memory: a country church. The little girls sat at the front where *monsieur l'abbé* could keep an eye on them, and they joined in. Behind them on one side sat the ladies, on the other most of the men. They sang antiphonally. Upstairs were the older men in the gallery who said nothing throughout. The *curé* had peasant boots on beneath his vestments. The candles were all wonky in their candlesticks. Above the altar on the tabernacle was a large statue of Our Lady of Lourdes. She had a crown of twelve bare light bulbs above her head. After the elevation, a boy server would be sent, always with a cuff around his neck, to flick a switch in the sacristy that made as many of them as were still working—about seven—come on. They did not stay on. They pulsated like fairground

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lights. Immediately after Mass, all the parishioners shot out of church to the graveyard to pay their respects to the dead and have a good gossip—in *patois* of course.

Again, the physical details reveal little of how different it was, different not just from a church in England but from a church in Spain or Italy. Europe as late as the Sixties was a patchwork of different cultures. Each country, each region, each social class, each religious grouping had different ways of doing things, and their permutations were enormous. French cigarettes were different from Spanish, which were different from German, which were different from Belgian. There were next to no international brands. The French had a particular attachment to ones wrapped in yellow *papier maïs*. They went out but were kept in the mouth stuck to the lower lip and jiggling up and down as conversation proceeded.

The different cigarettes smelled different and so did the drains and indeed the disinfectant that was poured down them. The consumption of garlic also varied across Europe. This meant that France actually smelled different from Italy or Germany. It hit you as soon as you walked down the gangplank of the cross-channel ferry. The French drank different things, aperitifs called Suze, Byrrh, Avèze, Lillet, out of different-shaped glasses at different times. Different classes drank different drinks in cafés: peasants and workers drank *canons* of *rouge*. Different regions drank different drinks: there was precious little beer south of Valence. And of course different regions ate different things. I remember one grandmother listening in horror as someone suggested putting thyme in a certain beef stew. "Never," she said, "we have never done that," then added she had heard it was done at X (a village four miles away).

The French grew up at a different speed from the English. French 14-year-olds were far more mature than their English counterparts, especially the boys. But then they sort of got stuck and behaved like teenagers until they were 26, especially the bourgeois ones. They were proud of stealing the silver cutlery from their aunts' houses—that sort of thing. Cars were a different shape and made different noises, and so did policemen's whistles. Road signs and driving rules were different. The French wore different clothes. Peasants did wear berets. Young men did wear French velvet trousers.

And all these and many more differences could be found across Spain, Italy, and Germany. This rich diversity of cultures has gone. Of course national differences still exist—you will still eat better in France than in England—but the diversity now is feeble compared to then. Shops across Europe stock more and more of the same products at the same prices. Avèze is dead and the other drinks gather dust while whisky and Heineken sales soar. It's (more or less) the same music you hear, the same smells you smell, the same cars you buy, and the same social problems you encounter with the same solutions—counseling, condoms, and handouts—being offered.

French Catholicism, too, is dead. Catholicism still exists in a very feeble state but French Catholicism, the distinctive traditions of town and country, is dead. And so is the bourgeois culture. Families are small and fluctuate, and informality rules: no handbells, no long silences. To be sure, there are still middle-income groups, but no longer a particular bourgeois culture. All over Europe cultural homogenization is on the march. Europeans used to laugh at Americans for their whirlwind tours of ten European countries in ten days. "Can't they see these are different countries? Why, they don't even know which country they are in." Well, now, neither do we. A bar in Paris is much like a pub in London: same whisky, same music, same smell, and same odious Young People. Mass, with childish chants and grinning clergy in identical vestments, is much the same in Spain and Holland: the language is now different but the same kindergarten sentimentality and forced informality reign.

WHAT KILLED difference in Europe? The usual villains cited are American cultural imperialism and the European Union. The latter is a more likely candidate than the former. Brussels explicitly endorses a program of *harmonization* and regulates to enforce comformity, for instance in the case of driving habits and weights and measures. But homogenizing forces cannot succeed if they are resisted. Why is the resistance so weak?

Professor and Madame Duclos—a composite couple—are now in their eighties and have been married over fifty years. He is a lawyer and they live in a town north of Paris. They have three sons. One is divorced, another lives with a man. The Coffes—also composites—were peasants in south-central France. Two children cohabit. Two are divorced. "So what?" you say. "Just like the U.S. or Britain. What's the difference?" And that's exactly it. Another case of less difference, but this time the instance is not just another case but the explanation for the collapse of difference.

Much has been said about how family collapse produces social problems, notably crime and welfare dependency. But it has been less remarked that families are the agents for transmitting and maintaining *difference*. The distinct French Catholicism was maintained by and transmitted by French Catholic families, and the bourgeois way of life by the bourgeois family. Even the tiny details—the drinks, the smells, the clothes—were part of a tradition and culture learned in, practiced in, and made confident by families. Collapse the families, or even just break them up into smaller fluctuating units, and you collapse the thing that maintains difference. What an irony! All those French intellectuals extolling being different and attacking bourgeois notions of the family. And now the differences they and many of us adored are vanishing and all because the institution they so loathed, the family, was, actually, the best friend of difference.

American intellectuals have their obsessions, too, and they are not that different. They talk proudly about the variety, the riches of cultural difference in the United States. They approve of difference. But they too have assisted in the destruction of the family and the class system, the sound institutions that carry, nourish, and sustain different traditions and which also have the power to resist cultural homogenization imposed by big government or mass production and communication. Only those minority cultures that have kept strong families have kept their cultures intact. In the U.S., too, the irony is that difference depends on conservatism. □

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All-the-Presidents Man

RICHARD BROOKHISER

WHEN I was a boy, I had a book on the Presidents, from George Washington to John Kennedy, the incumbent. They were all presented as decent men, and every one was credited with some accomplishment. (The authors must have scratched their heads over Millard Fillmore; thank goodness for Commodore Perry.) Though I have grown older, I have not grown up. Covering presidential elections strikes me as the most wonderful job in the world. Nor am I alone in my interest. Thousands of children read books about Presidents, and millions of adults follow the elections.

Forrest McDonald's *The American Presidency* offers an intellectual history of the institution we find so fascinating: how the Framers came to create it, and how it has changed since their day. Mr. McDonald discusses a vast array of topics, from the Roman Republic to antitrust, in a flowing, witty voice. Copious footnotes—printed at the foot of the page—direct the reader to contrary points of view. College should have been like this.

The American Presidency: An Intellectual History, by Forrest McDonald (University Press of Kansas, 524 pp., $29.95)

No Ordinary Time; Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II, by Doris Kearns Goodwin (Simon & Schuster, 759 pp., $30)

Libertarians will be unhappy to learn that there was never an Eden when Presidents did not seek to push the envelope of their powers. Periods when that seems to have been the case were simply periods when Congress or the Supreme Court grabbed power more effectively.

One of the earliest and most ardent aggrandizers of presidential power was Thomas Jefferson. He paid seven and a half times as much for Louisiana as he had been authorized to spend; he got from Congress the power to seize without warrant ships suspected of violating the embargo of 1807; anticipating a later Democrat, he tried to pack the Supreme Court by impeaching a hostile Justice on trumped-up charges. The last scheme failed because Aaron Burr, as president of the Senate, conducted the trial fairly. The practice of waging campaigns by calling up storms of feeling on "issues" that are in fact spurious or trivial goes back to John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson. Theodore Roosevelt brought the tactic into the modern world. The pioneer of symbiotic relations with the press turns out, surprisingly, to have been the bland William McKinley.

Mr. McDonald does not take an Old Testament view of all these developments. Some of them have been salutary, and many were unavoidable. The broad impulse to revere the Presidency was probably inevitable, and one of the subtlest threads in Mr. McDonald's book is his awareness of the source of this reverence in human nature. Because all men have fathers, all societies seem to require father figures. Philip Schuyler, senator from New York in the First Congress, remarked that "I think the President a kind of Sacred Person." The aura comes down the decades, even to George Bush and Bill Clinton.

This may be why Mr. McDonald's final judgment is benign. "The Presidency has been and remains a powerful force for ensuring domestic tranquillity among a diverse and sometimes bellicose people." Hence, "it has been responsible for less harm and more good . . . than perhaps any other secular institution in history."

A darker view emerges from Doris Kearns Goodwin's *No Ordinary Time*, a portrait of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt during World War II. The darkness is unintentional. Mrs. Goodwin, a fluent writer and an industrious compiler, is a solemn worshipper of her subjects. Yet her narrative keeps undercutting her judgment.

If we make the office mythic, what kind of man will seek it, and what sorts of people will he gather round him? The big news of *No Ordinary Time* is that the wildest rumors of the Roosevelt haters were simple truth. The facts about Franklin's girlfriends

Mr. Brookhiser, an NR *senior editor, is the author of* The Way of the WASP.

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and Eleanor's girlfriends and boyfriends have come out before, but reading them all together is startling. The atmosphere of the Roosevelt White House was crazed and incestuous, like some cross between *Wuthering Heights* and *The Pearl*. It was as if eight people had the equivalent of seven personalities among them, and each one sought to make up his or her missing fraction by feeding off the others.

Eleanor Roosevelt was the most damaged. She had had a loveless childhood, and in the 13th year of her marriage, her husband had transferred his love to her secretary, Lucy Mercer. These blows left her unsuited for every other intimate relationship of her life, whether as mother or lover. She repaired the loss by relating to strangers —millions of them. She plugged the hole in her being with America.

Franklin was both more sinister and more admirable. His charm, like that of all narcissists, masked a cold core. As he was dying, he smuggled Lucy Mercer Rutherford (now a widow) into the White House and Warm Springs. His last slap at his wife was to leave Fala, their Scottish terrier, to a cousin in his will. But the charm was real. Winston Churchill, no dull fellow himself, said that meeting Roosevelt was like opening a bottle of champagne. From the Depression to the Battle of the Bulge, the country needed champagne, even if the policies that were served up alongside were flawed or disastrous.

The combined lesson of Forrest McDonald and Doris Goodwin is that the Rolling Stones were right. You can get what you need. But you may not always like what you get. □

Girl Crazy

DONALD LYONS

THE GERMAN playwright Bertolt Brecht was, by all reports, an obnoxious character: a Stalinist, a womanizer, an opportunist, cold, selfish, manipulative, sardonic, and no fan of soap. Now comes John Fuegi, a University of Maryland professor and founder of the International Brecht Society, to add yet darker colors to the canvas. Mr. Fuegi claims that most of Brecht's plays, including the most famous, were written in whole or in large part by a succession of masochistic mistress-muses.

Born in Bavaria in 1898, Brecht was by his late teens in the habit of appropriating the work of friends too besotted to object. These early friends were male, and the atmosphere, according to this book, was one of misogyny and "male love." But by 1919, Bert was a husband and father and was well fixed in a pattern of heterosexual exploitation, both erotic and literary. Brecht was, of course, a poet as well as a playwright, and Mr. Fuegi does allow him authorship of a number of his poems, "scribbled" in trains or on the run; it is sustained composition he sees Brecht as incapable of.

Brecht & Company: Sex, Politics, and the Making of the Modern Drama, by John Fuegi (Grove, 732 pp., $32.50)

Mr. Lyons is drama critic at the Wall Street Journal.

By 1924 Brecht had ditched his little family in Munich and was feeling his oats in Berlin. There he met Elisabeth Hauptmann, a passionate beauty of 27 who knew English and French (Brecht didn't) and made a living as a translator and writer. She fell under Brecht's spell; she fell, in fact, in love—a word Mr. Fuegi avoids, preferring to call her a provider of "sex and text." Brecht liked sex; his latest biographer seems to regard it merely as a form of exploitation. Thanks to Miss Hauptmann, Fuegi avers, "women, who had been marginalized as mindless and faceless objects in virtually all of Brecht's previous work, will rapidly become central, beings who control as much by what is between their ears as by what is between their legs." (Mr. Fuegi is a singularly graceless writer, and his tin ear spoils, as here, even passages of impassioned advocacy.)

Miss Hauptmann's greatest unsung contribution was supposedly to *The Threepenny Opera* in 1928. Here Mr. Fuegi has a case of sorts: she did translate John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* and made contributions to the eventual Brecht–Weill text, although a claim that she was responsible for 90 per cent of the successful musical seems overwrought. She got 12.5 per cent of the royalties; Brecht 62.5 per cent. The signature song "Mack the Knife" is cheerfully consigned to Brecht by Mr. Fuegi on the nasty grounds that its "strictly male orientation and its casual violence toward women . . . is quintessential Brecht." (He means literary violence; there is no hint of actual battery.) The work's plot contains a conflict between a woman's dream of equality (Elisabeth's input) and a man's fantasy of rape (guess whose). This pattern becomes compulsive for Mr. Fuegi: the nurturing woman *must* have been written by Miss So-and-So; the sadistic bastard is a self-projection of Bert. It amounts, however, to neither evidence nor literary criticism (since even bastards, when gifted, can create unbastardly characters).

In 1929 Miss Hauptmann produced, under her own name, an imitation *Threepenny Opera* called *Happy End* and it flopped. Next, she and Brecht wrote *Saint Joan of the Stockyards*, which was "largely modeled" on Shaw's *Saint Joan*. In fact, it stole heavily from two Shaw plays, *Saint Joan* and *Major Barbara*, both still under copyright. Mr. Fuegi, though, finds nothing to criticize in such tactics when engaged in by one of his heroines. The German *Saint Joan* featured a woman who "cares about other people, puts her own life on the line, and works to change the world for the better" (yeah!) and, in counterpart, "arrogant, egocentric, ruthless, charismatic men" (boo!). No prizes for guessing who wrote which half.

By 1932, Elisabeth was out as *maîtresse en titre*, and frail, lovely, tubercular Margarete Steffin was in. Bert liked writing sexy verses to women, and shy young Margarete was soon writing verses back. Mr. Fuegi disapproves, but masks his moralism in feminism, claiming that Miss Steffin's lines are "warm" and "non- or anti-masculine," while Brecht's are "brutal" and "abstract." Like Elisabeth and Bert, Margarete was an ardent Stalinist. She even went to a sanatorium in the Soviet Union, where, as Fuegi puts it, "sexual harassment and rape were severely punished." But mean Bert made her leave the "warmth of the Caucasus" to go, "lonely, freezing, and ill," to Moscow to get his plays pub-

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lished there. Brecht himself went to Moscow—it was now 1935 and his whole entourage had quit Nazi Germany—and penned an ode to the new subway, which had supposedly been built "by laughing young men and girls" in record time. (Muscovites, who knew how many corpses the lengthy job had cost, got a laugh.)

By 1938, Brecht and family, plus Miss Steffin, were settled in Denmark, where Brecht wrote his two greatest plays, *Galileo* and *Mother Courage*. Fuegi says Miss Steffin co-wrote *Galileo*, but he produces no evidence. In a letter she says, "I wrote out all of *Galileo*," but there's a big difference between "wrote out" and "wrote."

To justify assigning *Mother Courage* to Miss Steffin, Fuegi cranks up the familiar syllogism: 1) The character of the daughter "puts her life on the line to help change the world. . . . She is *not* willing to co-operate with the forces of evil in order to save her own skin." 2) "Such scenes of personal heroism are not usually found in work we know for certain was written by Brecht." 3) Ergo, Miss Steffin created the character of the daughter. Brecht is allotted the creation of Courage herself, on the grounds that she "acts in the over-dead-bodies-to-get-one's-own-way style so characteristic of virtually all Brecht's own writing." (Of course, even by Fuegi logic, this is one up to Brecht, since the character of Courage is so much richer an artistic accomplishment.) As for evidence to back up these feminist mantras, Mr. Fuegi refers to the "innumerable" notes handwritten by Brecht and Miss Steffin in the first draft of the play, but he cites not one. What, finally, *could* they prove anyway? Miss Steffin was admittedly the playwright's secretary and sounding board, and the theater, as Professor Fuegi seems to ignore, is always a collaborative process. And, too, where are the great Hauptmann and Steffin works written *sans* Brecht?

Poor Margarete, the Little Nell of the Brecht saga, died in a Moscow hospital in 1941 as the Brechts were riding east on the Trans-Siberian Express. Bert's alleged callousness (the story is complex) is repeatedly cited, of course, as "a central factor in her suffering and early death."

With Miss Steffin's death ends the innovative part of Fuegi's tale. The playwright's World War II years in Hollywood; his impudent denial of

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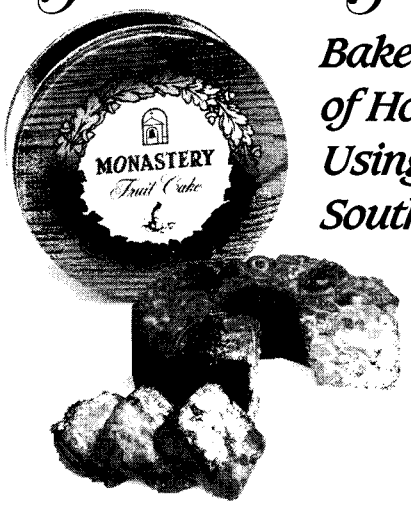

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Communist Party membership before HUAC; his flight to, eventually, East Berlin, where he was put in charge of the Berliner Ensemble and made to pay for his position by having to toady to a brutal regime—it has largely been told before. But never told with the unflagging animus that the founder of the International Brecht Society brings to bear. Even fans of HUAC, which Mr. Fuegi quaintly mislabels the "House of Un-American Activities," can admire the sheer chutzpah of Brecht's "No, no, no, no, no, never!" when asked the $64,0000 question, but Fuegi never gives the guy a break.

So intemperate is Mr. Fuegi's hostility that he constructs a trinity of twentieth-century monsters consisting of Hitler, Stalin—and Bertolt Brecht: "All three lives are littered with suicide attempts or actual suicides in the immediate circle. Each insisted on the creation of historical fictions radically at variance with the facts of his history. Each treated women as commodities and seemed incapable of establishing committed relationships." The banality of this psychobabble should not conceal the grotesque disproportionateness of the abuse.

Mr. Fuegi's motives are his affair, but his ideology is in plain sight: it is a virulent strain of women good/men bad Vulgar Feminism. Early on, he isolates something he calls the "Zelda Syndrome," referring to the fact that Scott Fitzgerald, with the consent of his wife, Zelda, published a few mediocre (*not* "typical") stories of hers under his name in order to get her money for ballet lessons. For this, Mr. Fuegi calls Fitzgerald a "literary pimp." Fuegi's handling of this incident, whose sources we can check, does not inspire trust in his handling of stories of sources we cannot check.

The book's coda takes the cake in explaining the self-effacing masochism of Brecht's women on the grounds that they were Communists, "seeking a socialist millennium of universal peace and justice for all regardless of gender, class, or race." Mr. Fuegi piously hopes that the suffering female characters they anonymously inserted into Brecht's plays will somehow rise from these texts to point to a new feminist dawn beyond the dark night of machismo. As the orchestra swells, skeptics might reflect on the resemblances between new feminism and old Stalinism. □

China, Outside and In

ROBERT ELEGANT

SOME BOOKS are important because of what they are, others because of what they are not. *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* and *China Wakes* epitomize the two poles.

There is a natural tendency, at least when it comes to judging journalism and scholarship, to distrust the insider, and trust the outsider. As Dr. Li Zhishui, Mao's personal physician, was the ultimate insider in China, so Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn —a husband-and-wife team who were from 1988 to 1993 correspondents for the *New York Times* in Beijing—were the ultimate outsiders. They had studied the Chinese language for half a year or so before arriving in Beijing, but (although Miss WuDunn is a third-generation Chinese-American) they had virtually no knowledge of the Chinese past, not even the recent history of the Communist Party or the People's Republic. Nor did they possess much knowledge of contemporary Chinese society.

That lack of potentially prejudicing knowledge certainly gave their reporting from China a stimulating freshness. Indeed, they were awarded a joint Pulitzer Prize largely because of the first-hand vigor of their reporting on the Tiananmen massacre. The same qualities that made their journalism so powerful do not, unfortunately, make their book a coherent whole. *China Wakes* is ephemeral, its judgments the flavor of the moment. It is important for what it is not: because it demonstrates forcefully that good outsider journalism does not necessarily make a good book.

China Wakes: The Struggle for the Soul of a Rising Power, by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn (Times Books, 501 pp., $25)

The Private Life of Chairman Mao: The Memoirs of Mao's Personal Physician, by Dr. Li Zhishui (Random, 628 pp., $30)

If the Kristofs' affiliation with the *Times* and their Pulitzer, as well as their engaging and intelligent performance on their promotion tour, did not virtually guarantee wide circulation, the deficiencies of *China Wakes* might well be unimportant. But their picture of China today—skewed because they still know so little of China yesterday, and also because of their boundless enthusiasm for China's bounding economic development—will be taken as gospel truth by many readers.

How is this for gospel? The Kristofs state at one point that the Communist regime brought about the death of some 30 million Chinese from 1958 to 1963. "Never before," they declare, "had so many people died in one country for any reason, whether war or natural disaster." Yet in the mid nineteenth century the Taiping Rebellion against the Manchu Dynasty brought about the death of at least 30 million and probably closer to 40 million.

Lu Xun, by far the most influential Chinese author of our time, is identified in passing as an "early-twentieth-century writer." That is rather like describing William Shakespeare as a "late-sixteenth-century playwright."

Moreover, the generalizations are so sweeping as to be nearly ludicrous. No human being in history, we are told, has improved the material condition of so many people in so short a time as has China's nonagenarian paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping. If that striking observation is true, it is because at no previous time have so many people lived in one country. Nonetheless, it is a far jump from chronicling that achievement to predicting, as the authors do, that China will dominate the next century.

The book of the insider, Dr. Li Zhishui, is too rich and too evocative to allow easy characterization. This is an intimate account of the bowels, the brains, and the psychic, as well as the physical, ailments of the late Chairman Mao Zedong, and so is of the highest importance: for revealing the unseemly private face and the destructive passions of the man whom the youth of the world long venerated as

Mr. Elegant is the author of, among other books, Pacific Destiny: Inside Asia Today.

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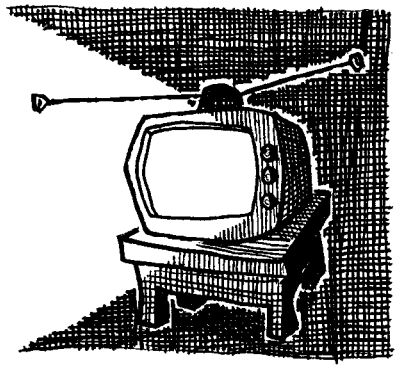
the savior of mankind, and for demonstrating with a wealth of evidence that the most damning previous accounts of Mao's behavior fell lamentably short of the actual horrors Dr. Li witnessed.

This extremely detailed anatomy of the revolutionary who created the People's Republic of China and then virtually destroyed his own creation is all but unique. So might Nero's soothsayer have written or Caligula's valet, *if* either had survived in his position for 22 years, as did Dr. Li, and *if* either had been vouchsafed the personal and political confidence Mao gave his physician, whom the paranoid Chairman clearly considered so entirely his own creature that no possible harm could come from such extended indiscretion.

Dr. Li saw Mao Zedong in all moods and at all times, from the insomniac vigor of 1955 to the protracted death scene of 1976. Even if the Chairman did lie to him, whether occasionally or often, as seems likely, the reality of the Chairman's behavior was always before his eyes.

During the arduous two decades that came close to destroying his own family life, Dr. Li saw a man who pro-



fessed great concern for the Chinese masses, but repeatedly sacrificed them to his visions and his whims. Mao could let millions die to further his dream of becoming an immortal by creating the "stage of pure Communism" over which Karl Marx rhapsodized.

He could also pass on his genital infections to the dozens of young women with whom he slept, in part because he hoped to absorb their youthful energy. He could not be bothered to undergo the treatment that would have cured his ailments.

His aversion to brushing his teeth led to a chronic oral infection and in

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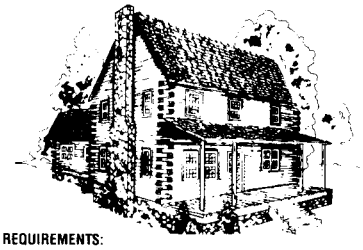

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time deprived him of most of his teeth. Disliking baths, he was superficially sponged with hot water by his attendants.

He failed to make a miracle and bring pure Communism into existence through the Great Leap Forward, but instead produced a devastating famine and a disastrous split within the Communist Party. Yet a few years later, he proclaimed the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, whose declared purpose was to destroy the old society totally. It did destroy the Communist Party and the People's Government, both of which had to be reconstructed a decade later—and it created a hiatus of more than a decade in education, industry, and commerce.

He attempted to ignore even the strictures of nature, which he believed he could bend to his will, as he bent all his associates. He had no close friends, no intimates, and he was effectively estranged from his termagant fourth wife, Jiang Qing. His conviction of his own infallibility and his virtually limitless power were therefore only once or twice questioned to his face. Yet he was pathologically suspicious, believing that Edgar Snow, the sympathetic American writer who first brought him to world attention, was an agent of the CIA.

Some parts of *The Personal Life of Chairman Mao* will be of interest chiefly to students of China. Most of the book, however, should deeply interest anyone concerned about the state of our world. There are just too many revelations and insights even to begin to cite them.

If there were nothing else, the revelation of the total antithesis between the public image of the virtually deified Chairman and the repulsive reality would amply repay the time spent reading the book. It should also make both readers and reporters think again how wrong immediate reporting can be, especially reporting about China. But there is so much more. Only by close reading can the riches of this book be fully appreciated. □

Prodigal Son

JEFFREY HART

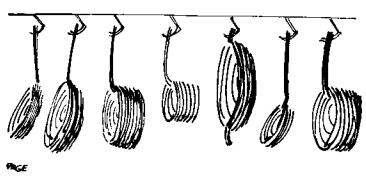
PROFESSOR Frank Lentricchia has made a drastic mid-career change. He is a denizen of the infamous Duke University English Department, a major center of the brand of literary "theory" allied with ideology that a large and aggressive segment of the professoriate has substituted for literature. Indeed, Mr. Lentricchia has been known as one of the foremost exponents of theory.

Modernist Quartet, by Frank Lentricchia (Cambridge, 320 pp., $54.95)

Then one fine day he had a revelation. He remembered that he actually liked *literature*. Like most of us, he had first gotten into the profession because he enjoyed reading poetry, novels, history, biography. But he had gradually turned away from literature to theory. Only recently did he discover that when you clawed aside the cobwebs of theory, the literature was still there.

And so he crossed the aisle. Theory he would write no more. He closed his Derrida and his De Man and opened his Frost, Stevens, Pound, and Eliot—the subjects of this book.

Its joys, indeed, attest to a conversion experience. John Stuart Mill closes his Bentham and Godwin, and opens his Wordsworth. Dorothy finds she isn't in Kansas any more. Newman looks in the mirror and is stunned to realize that all along he has been a Monophysite heretic. Saul changes his name to Paul.



Mr. Lentricchia now understands literary history as embracing, centrally, actual works of literature. He proves to be an expert, careful reader of his poets. He can provide unexpected revelations about what we might have thought familiar texts. Try him on Frost's "Mowing," Eliot's *Quartets*, Pound's great enterprise of the *Cantos*. He stitches the literary text firmly onto the canvas backing of the historical tapestry.

That tapestry includes: 1) the surrounding literary circumstance, i.e., the attenuation of the lyric tradition in English at the beginning of this century; 2) the feminization of taste in poetry; 3) the particular economic dilemmas of the poets, and other pertinent biography; and, 4) the larger economic circumstance ("capitalism").

All four of Mr. Lentricchia's poets have long been of compelling interest. (In his reconsideration, it seems to me, Frost and Eliot maintain their positions at the top, Pound rises heroically, despite disasters like the Adams and Chinese Cantos and the anti-Semitism, and Stevens goes down a little.) All four found ways to break out of a situation in which the lyric amounted to genteel watered-down Tennyson. They recovered the full male voice, the full range of experience, whether sordid or ecstatic. Their artistic success was extraordinary. They had to deal, however, with the cultural fact that a man was supposed to "make a living." (President Eliot of Harvard hoped that his relative would not stay in Europe and make a fool of himself like Henry James.) Lyric poets did not make a living, except for Frost, who slyly concealed this fact from an adoring audience.

That said, I think there are some difficulties with Mr. Lentricchia's account of the larger economic situation around 1900 ("capitalism," "culture of capitalism," "commodification") insofar as it affects art.

Modernist Quartet has a tendency not to look squarely at "the culture of capitalism" but to accept it as a large abstraction, and then to treat the abstraction as if it were a real thing. "Capitalism" here means mass production, sameness, the cash nexus, the commodification of all things. The attenuated lyric of 1900 thus becomes an example of a mass-produced and mass-consumed commodity. It doesn't matter that Pound believed exactly that. The historian need not accept Pound's opinion uncritically.

On the question of "capitalism," two comments. One is that people always choose abundance over scarcity. Is there a case to be made against a nice-looking dress, even if mass-produced? A case for wooden shoes? Are there re-

Mr. Hart, an NR *senior editor, is the author of* Acts of Recovery.

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ally any votes for scarcity and hierarchy over democracy and industry?

Second, during the same time-frame in which the lyric had fallen on bad days, remarkable things were happening in other areas of the arts. If in New York City in 1910 Pound concluded that American culture was sterile, he must have been strolling through the heart of the city blindfolded.

The triumvirate of Stanford White, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and Louis Tiffany were spectacularly transforming American architecture, sculpture, and design. White and Saint-Gaudens were in fact remarkably Poundian. They drew upon the past of Europe to transform the American present. On long trips through the cities of the Continent, they filled sketchbooks with old designs. Between 1900 and 1910, buildings and statues designed by them transformed New York. Their sketches were the architectural equivalent of Eliot's "mind of Europe," and what they produced was not servile imitation but creative transformation, a balance between the forces of tradition and the claims of originality. The art of Renaissance Italy, eighteenth-century France, and contemporary Paris were as important to these artists as they were to Pound and Eliot.

Subtract the buildings and statues that they and their contemporaries created, and the Manhattan of today would be sadly diminished. No New York Public Library, no Grand Central Station, no statue of Admiral Farragut in Madison Square or of General Sherman in Central Park, no Metropolitan Museum, no Morgan Library, no St. Bartholomew's Church, no Charles Dana Gibson home, and on and on. While Pound was wool-gathering in 1910, a great creative surge was creating a *Cantos* in stone. White and Saint-Gaudens had led the transformation of brownstone New York into a great world capital.

Yet no qualification I have entered here detracts from the central achievement of *Modernist Quartet*. Mr. Lentricchia has done a great deal to redirect attention to the literary object, and to that literary object as a part of history. He may succeed in reminding his colleagues in the professoriate of the importance—indeed, the *existence*—of literature. He has returned home from the tinkling cymbals of "theory," and it is high time to serve up the fatted calf. □

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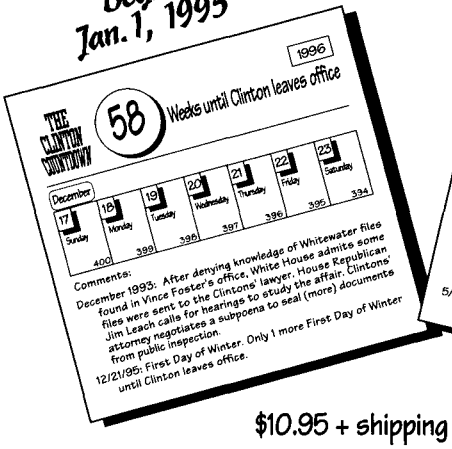
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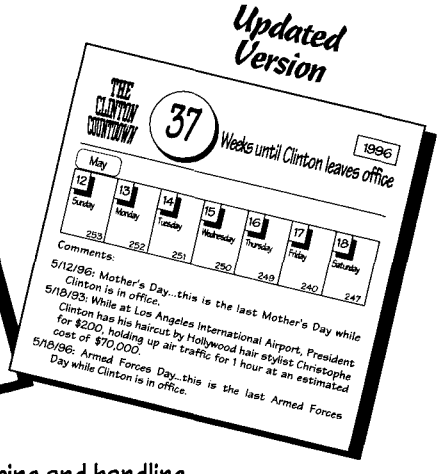
THE CLINTON COUNTDOWN
37
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1996
May
Comments:
5/12/96: Mother's Day...this is the last Mother's Day while Clinton is in office.
5/18/93: While at Los Angeles International Airport, President Clinton has his haircut by Hollywood hair stylist Christophe for $200, holding up air traffic for 1 hour at an estimated cost of $70,000.
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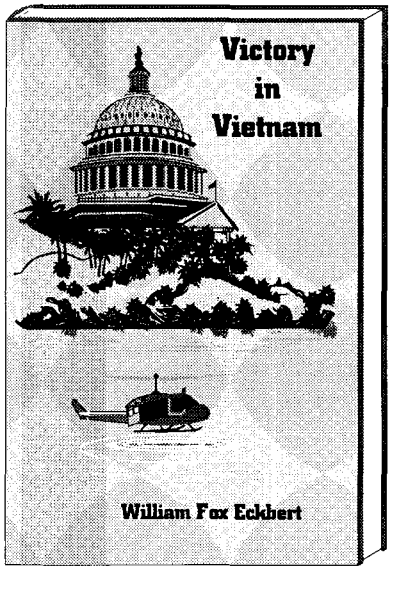

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FILM

From Pulp to Pap

JOHN SIMON

NO FILM arrives with more advance hype than ***Pulp Fiction***. The winner at Cannes, it was the opener of the New York Film Festival, where its writer-director, Quentin Tarantino, began his presentation by thanking Janet Maslin for her dithyrambic review in the *New York Times*, now being reprinted as half of a two-page ad. Mr. Tarantino made his directorial debut with the mean and nasty *Reservoir Dogs*, and has provided similarly sniggering-sadistic screenplays for other directors.

The *haute* audience at the Lincoln Center gala premiere laughed, applauded, and cheered like a bunch of Saturday-night rowdies attending the latest horror film. During the most troubling scene, when a woman who has OD'd has to be given a hypodermic straight to the heart with a wallop sufficient to penetrate the chest cavity (is this good medicine?), someone in the audience passed out, there were calls for a doctor, and, in the near-panic, the film had to be stopped, only to resume with an encore of the injection scene, making the premiere that much more prestigious and memorable.

Pulp Fiction consists of three interrelated stories and a framing story. In the latter, two unlikely criminals (the grotesque Amanda Plummer and the Mayfairish Tim Roth), who call each other Pumpkin and Honey Bunny, work up to the holdup of the coffee shop in which they are breakfasting. They seem rank amateurs rather than bona (or mala) fide crooks, but brandish compelling rods as they leap up to proclaim the holdup. Freeze frame.

We move into the first tale, in which two hitmen—Jules, a philosophical black, and Vincent, a pragmatic Latino—liquidate some delinquent associates of their boss, the awesome Marsellus Wallace, a thuggish black married to a white sexpot, Mia. They are a bit early for the job, so they keep up a dialectical inquiry begun in their car about whether Marsellus was justified in having a henchman thrown from a fourth-floor window for administering a foot massage to the seductive Mia. The innocence or indiscretion of such a massage is argued in a quasi-Socratic dialogue until the chronometrically correct moment to settle the hash of refractory business partners who have absconded with a mysterious attaché case containing something priceless.

One of the prospective cadavers, all of whom are scared out of their wits, was about to eat a burger, which Jules proceeds to sample, gastronomically evaluate, and consume; he then launches on Ezekiel's prophecy to the Philistines to terrorize the victims before he and the impassive Vincent blow them away. The guys look like errant yuppies who, if involved in drugs, would never aspire beyond contact with piddling street pushers, much less make off with Marsellus's attaché case, containing—what? We are repeatedly teased, but never find out.

You can see the whole game plan: accentuate the incongruous and ludicrous, either by juxtaposing something elevated (quotations from the Bible) with something low-down (gangland executions), or by expatiating on the trivial (the ethics of foot massage) in tandem with the terrifying (casual defenestration). Endless smartass chitchat is saturated with the detritus of Seventies pop culture (the movie and TV references, the music on the soundtrack) that you'd expect from someone who, like Mr. Tarantino, got his education clerking in a video store and saw every movie in tarnation, which, please note, is an anagram for Tarantino.

The hitmen mixing comic palaver with lethal acts come out of Martin Scorsese's *Goodfellas* by way of David Mamet's cinematic oeuvre, and hark back all the way to Godard. The attaché case with the mighty but unshown contents derives from Buñuel's *Belle de jour*, where a Japanese client brings along a mysteriously charged but never explained box on his brothel visits. The Bible-spouting killer is cribbed from Charles Laughton's *Night of the Hunter*, and connoisseurs of Seventies schlock, from QT's formative period, will surely spot many another *hommage* or plagiarism.

A fledgling filmmaker hatched in a video store presents another problem: old movies strike me as a poor substitute for life in the real world. If you catch Mr. Tarantino on the talk shows he is currently camping out on, you'll encounter a compulsive tongue-wagger who, like his characters, rattles on without substance or discernment, to say nothing of taste. *Pulp Fiction* is based on stories by Mr. Tarantino and Roger Avary, a Hollywood-besotted Frenchman whose own *film noir*, *Killing Chloe,* shows many traces of tarantinism (or is it tarantism, a mad urge to dance?). Much has been made of *Pulp Fiction*'s subdivision into three overlapping stories that lead into an epilogue dovetailing into the prologue, and that, moreover, play with chronological order. But titillation cures neither hollowness nor shallowness.

There are some amusing moments in the film, and some accomplished acting, notably from Samuel L. Jackson and John Travolta as the hitmen, and Bruce Willis as a boxer who refuses to throw a fight and must run from Marsellus's mob. But there is always something to undercut the pleasure, whether it is the rotten performance by the unappetizing Franco–Portuguese Maria de Medeiros, or some particularly blatant piece of copycattishness, as when Harvey Keitel is made to recycle the character he played in *Point of No Return*, itself a recycling of the French original, *La Femme Nikita*. Self-indulgence reaches its apogee when a character accuses another of being square and makes the appropriate gesture, whereupon a square in dotted outline appears on the screen. Truffaut did something similar but much better in *Shoot the Piano Player*. And the boxer story is so crammed with absurdities that just listing them would take up this entire column.

Still, the scene in which the not uninteresting Uma Thurman OD's and the hysterical John Travolta and drugged-out Eric Stoltz have to bring her back, literally, by the book (a long-moldering medical tome dug up from some forgotten cranny), which neither of them has ever read, is garish good fun. But from Mr. Tarantino's anything-goes filmmaking to true art is still quite a distance.

■ At the other end of the spectrum,

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*

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there is ***Vanya on 42nd Street***, which purports to be high, hieratic art and is really self-indulgent diddling. André Gregory, a second-rate avant-garde theater director (now practically inactive) and occasional actor, convened a number of performers, mostly old friends, and, to keep a hand in their craft, they started rehearsing Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* in various locations, chiefly the Victory Theater, a decaying former movie house in New York's Tenderloin. They would knock off for a while as one or another of them got a job somewhere, then regather and continue for several years. There was no intention of ever opening the production to critics and audiences, but chosen friends and celebrities were allowed to attend occasionally in small groups of twelve to thirty.

Vanya was played by the actor-playwright Wallace Shawn, with whom Mr. Gregory had co-starred in Louis Malle's cult film *My Dinner with André*. Mr. Malle came to see this underground *Vanya*, and promptly proposed to film it. And filmed it was, in another derelict theater, the New Amsterdam, preserving bits of ruined gaudiness from its Ziegfeld Follies days. But there is a basic contradiction here: if Gregory & Co. wanted to keep the experience small and private, why throw it open to even bigger multitudes than random theatergoers—the film world's hoi polloi?

This aporia extends to the modern street clothes in which we see the cast arrive down 42nd Street and proceed to act, as well as to the scanty props, which go from the world of samovars to that of I LOVE NEW YORK paper cups. The older actors—George Gaynes as the Professor, Lynn Cohen as Maman, Phoebe Brand as Marina—look genuinely Chekhovian; the younger ones—notably Julianne Moore as Yelena, Larry Pine as Dr. Astrov—are strictly present-day. And why bring in the Indian actress Madhur Jaffrey impersonating a Mrs. Chao, who claims to be the granddaughter of Chekhov's Bengali translator?

David Mamet's so-called new translation sounds very much like whatever pre-existing British version Mr. Mamet fiddled with. We get, on the one hand, "Some people might appreciate this peevishness; I do not," "The weather, which looked so cloudy formerly," and "I entreat you, please, to exercise all your influence that my husband and myself quit this place"; and, on the other, "There's the deadbeat, the freeloader," "Where am I to go, and Sonya here, and my mother, if I may be so picayune?" and, best of all, "And you can go to Hell!"

Mr. Gregory has the cast do all kinds of out-of-period things—such as Vanya miming a hanged man with his tongue hanging out as he says "Excellent weather for suicide"—or lets Vanya pant and yap at Yelena like a comic dog, or has Vanya wave a trendy toodle-oo at the grimly departing doctor. These were probably the misguidedly indulged ideas of Wallace Shawn, a dwarfish and porcine creature who croaks, slobbers, and has hissy fits. Vanya is, of course, no such thing, and the main reason Mr. Shawn is an actor (besides being the son of the longtime editor of *The New Yorker*) is that Woody Allen, in casting *Manhattan*, needed, for a comic visual effect, a performer who would look appreciably homelier than Mr. Allen himself. To allow this Vanya to use words such as "swine" and "swinish" is, to say the least, unfortunate.

Louis Malle has simply turned a nonplay into a nonfilm, but one handsomely shot by Declan Quinn. The actors—especially Julianne Moore, Larry Pine, and Brooke Smith (Sonya)—have their affecting moments, but that is almost more of a tribute to Chekhov, whose ability to partly survive even such a treatment testifies yet again to his indestructible genius. □

Manners in Hollywood

We've Got a Little Secret (or Two)

PAT SAJAK

"I'M SO GLAD you're one of us," she whispered conspiratorially. Her grip on my left triceps was much stronger than I would have expected from a short woman of maybe one hundred pounds and easily 65 years. "Will being here hurt your career?" It was a question I was asked re-

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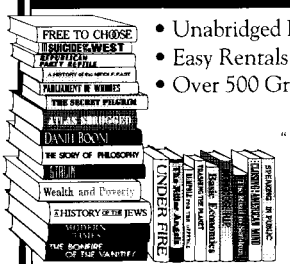

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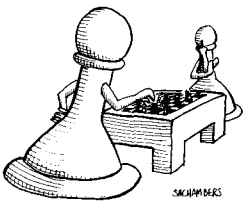
peatedly during the National Review Institute's Conservative Summit, held October 8–9 at the Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles.

My answer to her was, "No, of course not," but by the end of the weekend, I had begun to wonder whether I was, indeed, risking my professional life.

I thought about the Hollywood nights I'd spent at functions for trendy (mostly liberal) causes, when the questions from the press tended to be along the line of, "How's the show going?" and "Where did your wife get her outfit?" It was never suggested that my career might be in jeopardy. And yet, at virtually every conservative and/or Republican event I have ever attended, most press queries dwelled on the possible risks to my future ability to earn an income in my chosen field.



Looking down at the lady still holding my arm, wondering whether I *was* "one of them," I found myself becoming uncomfortable with the thought. I've never been much of a joiner, and somehow I felt I would be sacrificing my individuality by admitting to being one of *any* group; so I just smiled weakly.

I know I was being unfair. After all, I am a familiar television face, a relatively rare commodity at any Hollywood gathering in whose title the word "conservative" appears. This particular gathering was all about "Hollywood and American Culture." Its sessions were on such subjects as "Can an Artist Be a Conservative Today?" ("No," the head of a local theater group stated flatly. Tom Selleck, another member of the panel, winced at the certitude of the pronouncement) and "Hollywood and the American Idea" (a contradiction in terms, it was decided).

Conventional wisdom outside the media metropolises holds that Hollywood is a swirling cesspool of discredited ultraliberal notions and social deviancies which are stuffed down the throats of the unsuspecting public by degenerate men and women trying to rip apart our social fabric and thrust their vile and twisted notions into view for the purpose of . . . of . . . Well, it's right there that the conventional wisdom begins to break down.

What is the purpose of this conspiracy? What are *they* after? What's the point of offending or ignoring vast portions of the television-watching and movie-going public? Before attempting to answer my own questions, I must expose two of Hollywood's secrets.

Secret Number One is that most of Hollywood is centrist-to-conservative. That is to say, a majority of the people who make up what is known as "the Hollywood community" share most of the concerns and values held by people in Topeka and Sioux Falls, and Spokane and Clearwater.

Am I trying to argue that there is no liberal bias in the entertainment industry? No, not at all. In TV movies and theatrical movies, businessmen are still the villains, religion is portrayed derisively or not at all. Gays, lesbians, working women, and "people of color" are generally treated as sympathetic characters, often suffering the indignities heaped upon them by (yikes!) White Males. Condoms are mentioned more frequently than God (not counting expletives), and the pet theories of pop science are treated uncritically as facts.

So, again, why the portside tilt of programmers, who I maintain don't even believe in most of the bilge they pump out to the public? I think the answer lies less in a conspiracy than in cowardice.

And that takes us to Secret Number Two: In Hollywood, most executives, networks, and studios are scared to death of special-interest groups and the troubles they create. If the murderer of three people in an episode of a dramatic series is a psychopath who happens to be gay, network executives will have to bar the door against the firestorm of protest that will ensue. However, if the murderer is a CIA agent trying to cover up a secret government plan gone awry, who's going to protest? CIA agents? The government? No one will bother the network or, perhaps even more importantly, the sponsors. Ah, bliss!

Television and film executives love sharing off-the-record stories of one organization or another almost literally blackmailing a production into changing a theme or the way a character is portrayed. Many Hollywood budgets routinely include hush money to buy off protestors. That's why businessmen make such good bad guys. Angela Lansbury alone has tripped up dozens of them over the years on *Murder, She Wrote*. They're not a collectively organized, entrenched, politically powerful (as a whole), socially active interest group. In other words, it is less risky to offend the majority—meaning any large, amorphous group—than to offend a highly organized interest group, no matter how small.

The good news is that things are changing. The success of *Forrest Gump* and TV hits such as CBS's *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman* have surprised network chiefs and studio heads and caused them to take notice: the politically neutral or even conservative film or series can make plenty of money. But the bad news I have for my political brethren is that I don't think a "conservative takeover" of Hollywood is coming, nor do I think it's desirable.

What Hollywood's moderates-to-conservatives should be doing is becoming more vocal and more involved, not in the hope of "taking over," but in order to move television and motion pictures to a more realistic and balanced view of our country, its people, and their values. The goal should be to allow for a fair hearing for all ideas and all points of view and a fair chance to have them portrayed in a dramatic or comedic way. Right now, most "politically incorrect" script ideas need not apply.

So where were all of the Hollywood moderates and conservatives at the *NR* Summit? Why were they seemingly afraid to be there? The answer came from that slight, elderly lady who was so happy I attended. "Will being here hurt your career?" she asked, as did every journalist I spoke with that weekend.

"No," I kept saying. And yet, that the question had to be asked at all speaks volumes. □

Mr. Sajak is the host of Wheel of Fortune.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Rush to Us, by D. Howard King and Geoffrey Morris (Pinnacle, 325 pp., $5.99)

IN THIS BOOK, two NATIONAL REVIEW alumni latch genially onto one of the premier media phenomena of our era. Rush Limbaugh, than whom nobody has a larger radio audience, and few a more rapidly expanding TV fandom, has if not quite invented himself to fill the yawning gap on the starboard side of the broadcast media, then appeared at the right mo-

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ment: when America wanted somebody to tell hard truths with joyous enthusiasm and a what-the-Hell attitude about offending the easily irked. Mr. Limbaugh's own two books, patched together nicely from his radio presentations, give the essence of the man; this book introduces us to a broad sample of Americans who have made him a central part of their daily lives: the denizens of the "Rush Rooms," the gatherers at conclaves to spread the word. The bulk of Mr. Limbaugh's broadcasts are very much worth attending to, even if his own rush to us leads him now and again into sloppiness and overstatement. The Limbaugh experience is exhilarating, and the exhilaration is captured here.

—David Brudnoy

The Anti-Egotist: Kingsley Amis, Man of Letters, by Paul Fussell (Oxford, 193 pp., $23)

PAUL FUSSELL, a friend and admirer of Kingsley Amis for nearly forty years, believes Mr. Amis's non-fiction has been neglected because in significant part of his outspoken, uncompromising, zealous, and often hostile opposition toward political left-wingers. Mr. Fussell aims to end that neglect of someone he considers an important Man of Letters not wholly mischaracterized as an "unreconstructed late Victorian." Throughout his very productive life, Amis has waged war against egotism, preciousness, self-satisfaction, phoniness, stinginess, and pomposity. Described by Fussell as "a critic and literary sensorium turned story-teller," Amis has fought his good fight against all forms of authoritarianism and orthodoxy, whether religious, political, social, economic, or artistic. Mr. Amis is fortunate to have a friend as loyal and learned as Mr. Fussell, but this book's appreciative audience may understandably be limited to those who share the views of Mr. Amis . . . and Mr. Fussell. —Ben C. Toledano

The Old Way of Seeing: How Architecture Lost Its Magic (And How to Get It Back), by Jonathan Hale (Houghton Mifflin, 241 pp., $29.95)

WHAT MR. HALE, an architect and architectural critic, really wants is for us to design buildings in the "old way," buildings with "contrast, tension, balance," buildings with harmony and, above all, with "magic." According to Mr. Hale, these elements were lost in the nineteenth century—when calculation and mechanistic thought displaced imagination and intuition. The illness is perfectly diagnosed, but this book fails to offer a compelling cure. Just how difficult it is to get back to that old way of seeing is evident from a passage where Mr. Hale paraphrases Alexis de Tocqueville: "Democracy won't tolerate superior talent, says Tocqueville; give the masses power and you can expect a second-rate culture." We are thus brought face to face with one of the supreme conundrums of contemporary American society: Are high culture and its daughter, "good taste," aristocratic and thus anti-democratic? This is the essential question raised by *The Old Way of Seeing*. Jonathan Hale presents the threads of the matter very well, but they are never woven together to make a complete tapestry.

—David Garrard Lowe

Debt of Honor, by Tom Clancy (Putnam, 756 pp., $25)

DO WE really want a thriller of such massive proportions that we could not conveniently read it on the bus or in the bath? Perhaps; Alexandre Dumas and Walter Scott wrote at similar length. But is the famous and famously conservative Tom Clancy as good a storyteller as they were? Alas, no; the bulk derives less from the needs of his narrative than from special effects—computers searching, fleets maneuvering, missiles being launched, aircraft shooting one another down. Jack Ryan, his hero from *The Hunt for Red October*, ex-CIA, now National Security Advisor to the President, is called on to save America from a double-pronged attack, economic and military, by revenge-seeking Japanese. The scene moves restlessly from place to place, accompanied (on the soundtrack, as it were) by constant technobabble. No one says anything quirky or humanly interesting, because the characters have purely functional roles which must not be blurred. However, the climactic battles are certainly exciting, in the manner of *Top Gun* or Stallone–Schwarzenegger. And there is a happy ending: most of the politicians in Washington are wiped out.

—Anthony Lejeune

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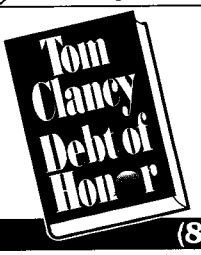

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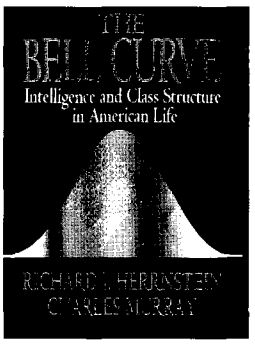

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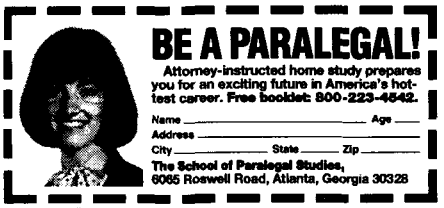
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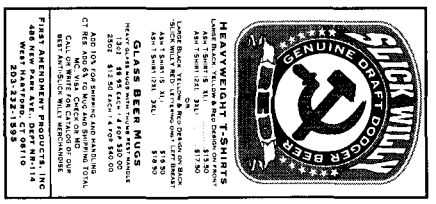

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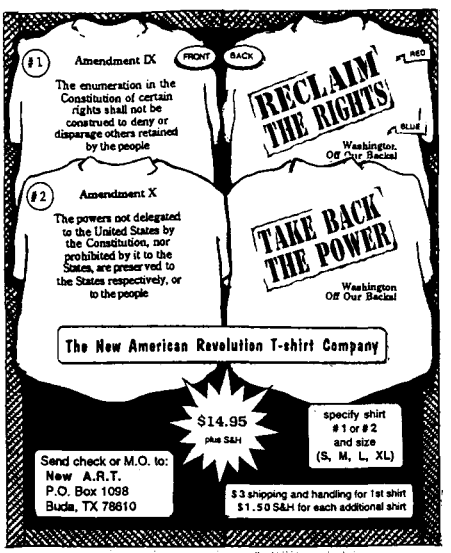
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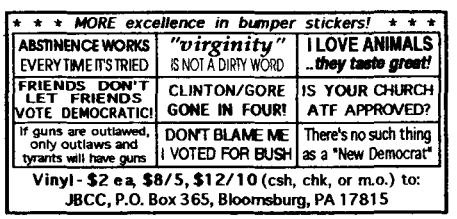
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O'SULLIVAN

(Continued from page 43)

to warn of the changing ethnic composition of the American people, then it must be equally racist to welcome or celebrate it, since that would suggest you fear or dislike white Americans and want to see them discomfited in some way.

More fundamentally, however, in what sense would the "people of color" who would constitute this new multicultural majority be "American"? Some, of course, would be Americans in the most straightforward sense. They would have been born in America, been educated in American schools, watched American TV programs, played American sports, fought in American wars, and—the bravest of them—smoked American cigarettes.

Now, if such black Americans were to become the majority in 2050 (which is, of course, demographically unrealistic), we could view this with indifference. A changing ethnic balance resulting from differential ethnic birthrates among people of the same nationality—people profoundly committed to one another in a wider American ethnicity—should not make white Americans feel culturally dispossessed.

But that is not what is being hinted at in the demographic forecasts. The forecast of a majority-minority America by 2050 is entirely dependent upon immigration levels. And the immigrants and their children, as we have seen, may not be as American as apple pie in any real sense. Some may become so; others, living in a welfare state and with multicultural programs, may remain in some sense alien, retaining languages and cultures separate from those of the American nation.

In effect, instead of ethnic changes occurring within the American nation—which ought to be acceptable to conservatives as the outcome of spontaneous social action by families—the American nation would have been overwhelmed by people from cultures whose putative spokesmen are already demanding a wholly different definition of American nationhood on the grounds that they constitute a new American majority. As INS Commissioner Doris Meissner said recently (and approvingly): "We are being transformed."

If so, it will have been accomplished by public policy without public discussion. It is not racist to object to this; it is simply democratic.

The Danger of Balkanization

IN FACT, immigration and the multiculturalism it feeds are threatening to dissolve the bonds of common nationhood and the underlying sense of a common national destiny, bringing forward the danger of a Balkanized America. According to every poll taken in recent years, the American people realize this. Only the politicians and intellectuals, including conservatives, are oblivious to the dangers, or persist in explaining them away.

Mr. Kemp and Mr. Bennett are not so much explaining them away as making a vigorous case on the other side of the argument. Given public opinion, their courage can be applauded, as can their good-heartedness and optimism. But when they are on the same side as irredentists waving Mexican flags, they should ask themselves if they haven't got it wrong. For the survival of America is a big thing to get wrong. □

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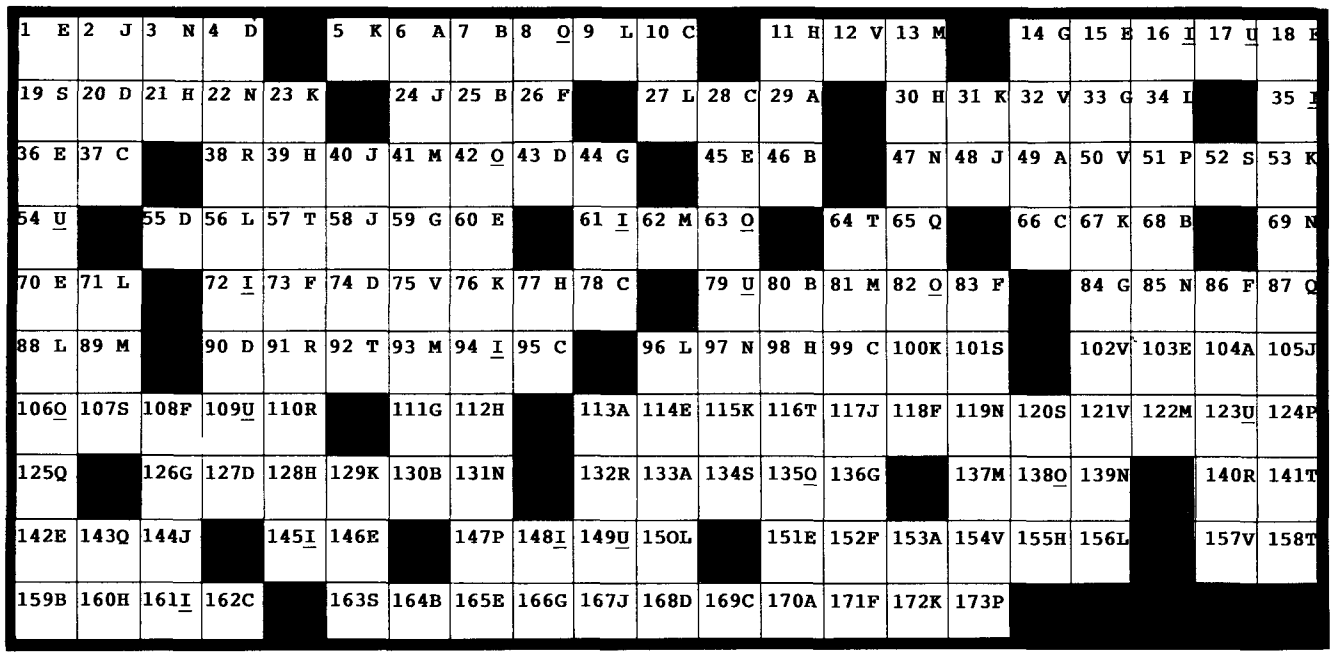
TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney



DEFINITIONS

A. First rate — 153 133 104 29 6 49 170 113

B. Clock-puncher's bonus — 46 159 164 68 130 25 80 7

C. Underhanded — 95 162 66 28 78 169 10 99 37

D. Dated horse? — 4 43 20 90 168 55 127 74

E. Abe trademark (2 words) — 60 45 146 151 114 165 36 103 15 70 142 1

F. Like the owl — 86 152 18 26 73 83 108 171 118

G. Aliens — 111 166 33 136 126 14 59 84 44

H. Coven activity — 30 160 21 98 39 128 155 77 112 11

I. Shah Jehan structure (2 words) — 145 148 72 16 94 35 61 161

J. Angler's home of choice — 24 105 58 144 48 167 2 40 117

K. Occurring at times — 67 23 5 115 100 129 53 172 31 76

L. Brazen — 156 9 96 27 150 88 71 56 34

M. Place in peril — 81 122 89 137 62 93 13 41

N. Heartbreak — 139 131 47 119 97 69 22 85 3

O. Merrie old place — 135 138 42 8 82 106 63

P. Embattled title — 147 51 173 124

Q. Canoe adjunct — 65 87 143 125

R. Kitchen masters — 38 132 91 140 110

S. Hold down — 163 107 134 19 101 120 52

T. Comes to an understanding — 92 64 116 141 158 57

U. Subway items — 109 17 149 123 54 79

V. Baton Rouge university — 121 102 75 50 12 154 157 32

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to Last Issue's Trans-O-Gram. HOWARD KLEINBERG: *So, Sue Me:* "America has been tied into a litigious knot. In most cases, the suits are filed in hope that the defendant will want to avoid the cost of a trial and settle even though the claims against them have marginal merit."

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Kemp/Bennett vs. The Right

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 21

The dispute on immigration policy within the Right had up until just now exercised itself in the theoretical playing grounds. It is a drastic truncation of the arguments, but fair enough to say that one side hailed the historical accomplishments of immigrants, one of whom married Pocahontas, while the second called attention to an exceeding of immigration speed limits, which has dried up the assimilative machinery by which traditionally an indigent newcomer became self-sustained and productive. But the two camps are now out in the open, moving toward one another with sabers drawn.

What happened was Proposition 187. It is a very hot ticket in California, where it is known as the "Save Our State" initiative. What it says, among other things, is that California should not contribute to the maintenance of illegal immigrants. P-187 is very hotly supported as a register of the frustration of Californians swamped by illegals.

The other side, Don't Raise Barriers, is taken by the usual ideological conglomerate, the ACLU/Amnesty/American Way types, alongside the pure libertarians. But the shock came on October 19 when Jack Kemp and William Bennett issued a joint statement urging Californians to vote No on 187. Here are two right-wing Republican presidential contenders who suddenly seemed to be saying that illegal immigrants should continue to be subsidized.

Actually, Messrs. Kemp and Bennett took some pains to say that this was not what they were saying. Under existing law, they stressed, illegals do not qualify for welfare, indeed neither do freshly inducted citizens (the technical ban on welfare for them is for five years). What the Supreme Court has held (1982) is that it is unconstitutional to deny any child access to public schooling. And that Court ruling would presumably be invoked the day after 187 was passed, in effect making the proposition a dead letter.

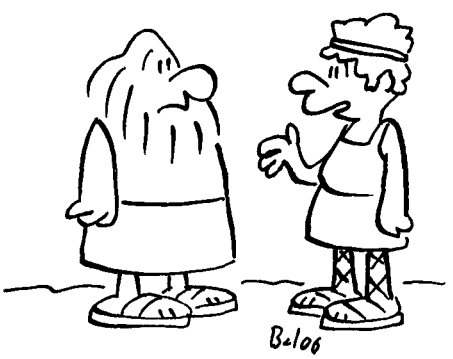
The Kemp–Bennett position says: Look, there shouldn't be illegal immigrants in California, but it is the business of the Federal Government to keep them away. To pass such a measure as 187 situates the GOP with a strain of xenophobia which will very quickly (California will be more than 50 per cent Asian/Hispanic at the turn of the century whatever happens to illegals) evolve into massive anti-GOP resentments by the majority of Californians. That could lead to such electoral catastrophes as pursued many GOP candidates who were slow in boarding the civil-rights crusade.

Now there are fascinating personal aspects to the controversy. One of them is that Bill Bennett began by endorsing 187. But, he now explains, what he meant by doing this was to stress his agreement with existing law, namely that illegals had no claim on federal bounties. And then Jack Kemp—who while opposing 187 heartily endorses existing bans against federal support of illegals—as recently as in 1990, when he served as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, was writing letters defending federal bounties to illegals using the conventional language of Mother Welfare ("all persons residing within this country are entitled to the equal protection of the laws . . . Our attorneys are now drafting a Departmental regulation which will bar discrimination on the basis of alienage . . .").

Forget it; sanity lies in respecting the long accreditation of Messrs. Kemp and Bennett as opponents of imperial welfarism. But they are making a point, namely that to back a proposition that will not in fact change anything (only the Federal Government can secure the frontiers; only the courts can modify constitutional welfarist asseverations), but that will encourage a vigilante mood to report on suspicious foreigners seeking welfare, is to discourage a solid body of potential Republican voters.

But supporters of 187 are anxious to back the government in Washington up against the wall. It is asking Californians not only to tolerate four million illegals but also to school them, look after their health, and pay them unemployment benefits—because that is what we are being forced to do not withstanding platonic restrictions against doing so. So: Get up off your bureaucratic arse and—do something.

A reasonable position, and the position likeliest to prevail among conservative analysts and Republican voters. Because the burden of immigration is greater than our resources to cope with it □



"It's a weird enough idea as it is, Aristotle, without calling it a 'syllogism.'"

Different Analyses Of What's Wrong

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 18

The Democratic machine is going nuts trying to cope with the election. We were given only two short years ago the maxim, "It's the economy, stupid," as if it came from Mt. Sinai, the definitive explanation for lagging political popularity. But, the commentators point out breathlessly, the economy is on a significant upswing, unemployment is down, inflation is okay, profits are up, the national deficit is creeping down, so what's the matter with the voters, other than that they are stupid?

The question is approached on several levels. Serious analysts are capable of saying, 1) Yes, the economy is up: So what did you expect, stupid, at the end of a business cycle? There have been 32 of these over the past 140 years, and always the economy has turned better after the bad end of the cycle. 2) When the economy revives, so does unemployment diminish, and why would you expect otherwise? 3) Inflation is not steaming because the Federal Reserve Board has followed a prudent course of action (arguably, too prudent), and the head of that board, by the way, is someone named to that position by Republican George Bush. 4) Yes, the deficit is shrinking, but the principal reasons for

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this are a) there has been a drastic reduction in defense spending, made possible by the foreign-policy successes of Republican Presidents—and by the way, it is altogether possible that we are overdoing our defense reductions; b) the huge sums of money we lost in our S&L debacle are tapering off; and c) the down side of the Clinton budget bill of 1994 has yet fully to be experienced—it will be another year or two before we measure the results of a capital flight from the rise in the marginal tax rate.

Okay, that's what the schooled economist would say, but we aren't dealing with schooled economists, we are dealing with the kind of people who in California are looking hospitably at Mr. Huffington in preference to Mrs. Feinstein, in Tennessee are wondering whether to return Senator Jim Sasser to Washington even though he would probably be the Majority Leader, in Washington are thinking of dumping Tom Foley, no less, the Speaker of the House. And all over the country there is the phenomenon of Democratics not wishing to associate their names with that of their leader, Mr. Bill Clinton.

Now the next level of analysis jumps in with the observation that Mr. Clinton is personally discredited. He told us he managed to smoke marijuana cigarettes without inhaling; he maneuvered around the Vietnam draft so as to avoid service in the military he now serves as Commander-in-Chief; he promised to do something about Bosnia, didn't; screwed up in Somalia; gave in to the Black Caucus on the Haiti question; got stuck in a welter of misrepresentations involving his financial affairs; has to raise a collection and hire a $500-per-hour lawyer to keep him from confronting a working girl before whom he allegedly dropped his pants. That is analysis at another level.

It does not, however, get to the heart of the problem. Politicians' personal weaknesses don't seem to matter that much any more. Who doubts that Dan Rostenkowski will be re-elected? Who cares that Barney Frank et al. are militant gays? So what that JFK screwed everyone between ages 18 and 38 who was game? Haven't we just heard a documentary on FDR reaffirming that his married life ended when Eleanor found the love letters—even before FDR was nominated for Vice President, let alone made President for life? Didn't LBJ get rich by exploiting his powers to regulate the issuance of TV licenses? Isn't Rudy Giuliani, Mayor of New York, the most recent bard of truth-telling in politics, the same man who came out for a crime bill because it would send $800 million to New York, never mind that to raise that $800 million, New Yorkers would be taxed $1.1 billion?

That analysis focuses on a widespread feeling that the whole shooting match is not working. That disillusionment fuels a desire to root out incumbents, yes. But it goes one step further and asks, What really does it matter who is elected? The virus is bi-partisan.

To this order of skepticism one needs to say, Ah, we understand your frustration. But there *is* a difference. □

Democratic Tribulations

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 25

The so-called "Contract" read out by Congressman Gingrich on the steps of the Capitol has been the source of much amusement, a little of it contrived. The gravamen of the criticism has been to the effect that here we had 152 Republican congressmen theatrically assembled, together with more than 185 aspirant congressmen, to pledge themselves to square a circle. Everybody knows that you cannot square a circle, right? "Do not urge a triangle to break out of the prison of its three sides, else its life will come to a lamentable end," was how Chesterton put it. And critics are saying that you cannot have a balanced budget at the same time as you have a reduction in taxes, let alone an increase in defense expenditures.

What brought special delight to Democratic strategists was that they had finally been given something tangible to chew on. Up until the Contract, what they had had to do was to defend President Clinton, not something many Democrats wished to undertake, at least not those who don't make it a practice to scale Mt. Everest during their vacations, or bicycle across Niagara Falls. The exuberant feeling now was that they could change the subject, when the word Clinton came up, and turn instead to Republican hypocrisy. Hypocrisy because nobody can lower taxes and reduce the budget at the same time, hypocrisy because the Contract was ever-so-careful not to specify what reductions in federal outlays the Republicans would have to sponsor in order to reduce spending at all. Such things as Social Security and Medicare.

That tactic had a fatal accident over the weekend when someone revealed a working paper for the Clinton White House on how in the future federal expenditures might be trimmed. What ho!—among the recommendations are reductions in Social Security expenditures and in Medicare. Mr. Clinton rushed to the microphones to deny that he harbored any such intention, to insist that the working paper was the scribbling of some teenage staffer working in the attic of the White House, etc., etc. Certain things we do not talk about even if they are contemplated. By the year 2002, 50 per cent of the federal budget is going to be spent on babybooming senior citizens, as things are currently drafted. Manifestly, something has to be done, involving Social Security (e.g., indexation of senior-citizenship) and Medicare (e.g., larger deductibles).

Up against their own memo, the Democratic heavy thinkers decided that the thing to do was to invoke the nightmare of Reaganism. Do you want to go back to Reaganomics? To trickle-down economics? To rich get richer, poor get poorer? To . . . the Grapes of Wrath?

There was one problem with this strategy, nicely summarized by one forlorn Democratic strategist quoted in *The New Yorker* by Michael Kelly: "They don't see the true scope of it. The President and his political people do not understand what has happened here. Not one of them ever comes out of that compound. They get in there at 7 A.M. and leave at 10 P.M., and never get out. They walk around the place, all pale and haggard, clutching their papers, running from meeting to meeting, and they don't have a clue what's going on out here. I mean, not a clue. . . . They think people hate Ronald Reagan, but I don't think people do."

In warning against Reaganism, the Democrats perforce stress the contrast between then and now. This is not an entirely encouraging enterprise. We had begun to climb out of the Bush recession well before Mr. Clinton was elected, and back in the Reagan days the GNP rose at a higher rate than today. Furthermore, the statistics for the first 11 months of fiscal 1994 reveal that whereas total federal revenues increased by 9.3 per cent, those that came in through personal income taxes increased by only 6.8 per cent.

How come? Reaganism in reverse is already here: Increase the marginal rate of taxation, decrease revenues. All in all an unhappy time for Democratic statisticians who are out there defending the circularity of the circle, against which the Contract of Messrs. Gingrich et al. is engaging the public imagination. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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A Coffee Thing

THIS is a column about coffee—drinking it, buying it, using it for ulterior purposes. It's also about a kind of snootiness that quickly flips into reverse snobbery, which sooner or later flips again into reverse-reverse snobbery, leaving the snob exhausted and confused. I myself am exhausted and confused—as you can tell.

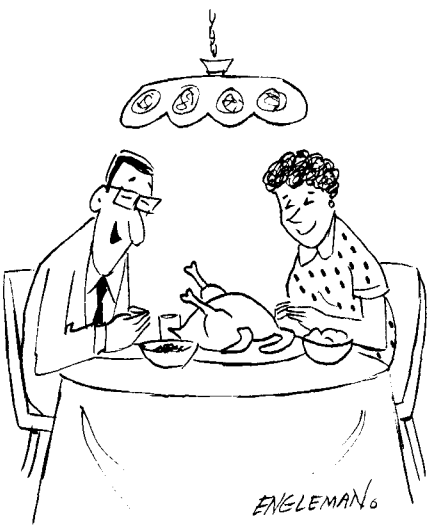
In the early Eighties I lived in a university town in the Midwest. Like all such communities it was an uneasy mixture of town and gown. On the main street the pickups cruised slowly past the Volvos; in the neighborhoods the "U.S. Out of El Salvador" lawn signs co-existed with the "U.S. Out of the U.N." stickers in the front window next door. You could get your hair cut for $3.50 (no tip) at Sam's Barber Shop, or get it styled for $10 at Shear Delites Unisex Cuttery.

And you could drink coffee at Carl's Coffee Cup, or you could drink coffee at the Calico Munchkin. At Carl's coffee was a quarter. At the Munchkin the "house blend" sold for 65 cents, although most customers would choose a purer brew from countries squirming in the grip of Western imperialism. At Carl's your coffee was brought by a post-menopausal waitress with a pencil stuck in her bouffant. At the Munchkin you were served by a bouncing sophomore in a tube top, who more often than not forgot to charge you.

I had just moved from San Francisco. There everyone was a coffee snob. While most Americans might use a Mr. Coffee, for example, none of my acquaintances owned one; most had espresso machines, or some black lacquer turbine spouting fearsome tubes and pressure valves designed by (who else?) Germans. Others used the Melita method, in which the specially ground coffee was arranged at a precisely measured angle relative to the incoming water so as to maximize the exposure of the grounds while slowing the filtering process . . . or something. In any case, I'd caught the bug—bad. By the time I arrived at the university my snobbery was intense and unremitting; my coffee had to be dark and rich, deeply aromatic, strong as a plow horse. Far more important, it had to mark me as a man above the herd.

By inclination, then, I was, so to say, a Munchkin man. Each morning for the first several months I would spread my *New York Times* before me and imbibe cup after cup of some Calico Munchkin specialty. On every side would sit professors in work shirts, turtlenecks, or woolen sweaters, their awestruck students miming their every move as they scraped chunks of banana-bran muffin from their beards. They would speak confidently of Nicaragua's rising literacy rates, Israeli barbarism, ketchup as a vegetable! Then one morning, I overheard a circle of grad students chortling over some witticism—no one told "jokes" in the Calico Munchkin—and the thought hit me with full force: *"These people laugh through their noses."* And I thought: *"I can't stand these people."* I thought: *"I hate these people."*

At once my snobbery did a one-and-a-half gainer and landed belly side up. Suddenly the thought of being a Munchkin man chilled me. In a matter of days I had decamped, permanently, to Carl's. It is difficult to describe the coffee at Carl's: as you sipped it words like "resin" and "road kill" suggested themselves. I didn't mind, for my coffee drinking was still serving its primary purpose, which was to set me apart from people I held in derision. I flattered myself that I remained above the herd; it was just a different, smaller, and more contemptible herd—the "herd of independent minds," in Harold Rosenberg's phrase. And besides, I really did prefer the company, if not the coffee, at Carl's. To most of the patrons the idea of ketchup as a vegetable seemed pretty damn commonsensical.



"I'm most thankful that the fall elections are over."

COFFEE snobbery transcends coffee; its pull is stronger than the sternest double cappuccino. I have been a reverse coffee snob for almost a decade now, pretending to savor the prole aroma of Folgers and Maxwell House. I even own a Mr. Coffee, with which I horrify my San Francisco friends when they come to visit. But now what? Look around: walk through any city neighborhood or suburb; travel beyond the yuppie enclaves, into deepest Illinois or Idaho. Coffee snobbery is America's fastest growing business. The Starbucks chain of coffee houses has grown like cancer from its native Seattle; its imitators are everywhere. People—not professors, not grad students, not yuppies, but *people*—now buy Sumatran Boengie at $5.50 a half-pound, and order it ground to their specifications, and carry it home in little sacks, and gather round the Braun espresso machine in the kitchen to comment on the bean's earthy yet delicate balance of insouciant acidities.

All of America, in short, is turning into a giant Calico Munchkin. In the face of this new development, I am at a loss as to how to position myself. When the proles sip Ethiopian Harrar, profs and their legions will defect to Maxwell House. And I once again will be caught in the middle. The whipsaw effects of snobbery take their toll, and the only place for me may be the coffee snob's last refuge: to admit, once and for all, that I never much liked coffee in the first place.

—ANDREW FERGUSON

Mr. Ferguson is a senior writer for The Washingtonian.

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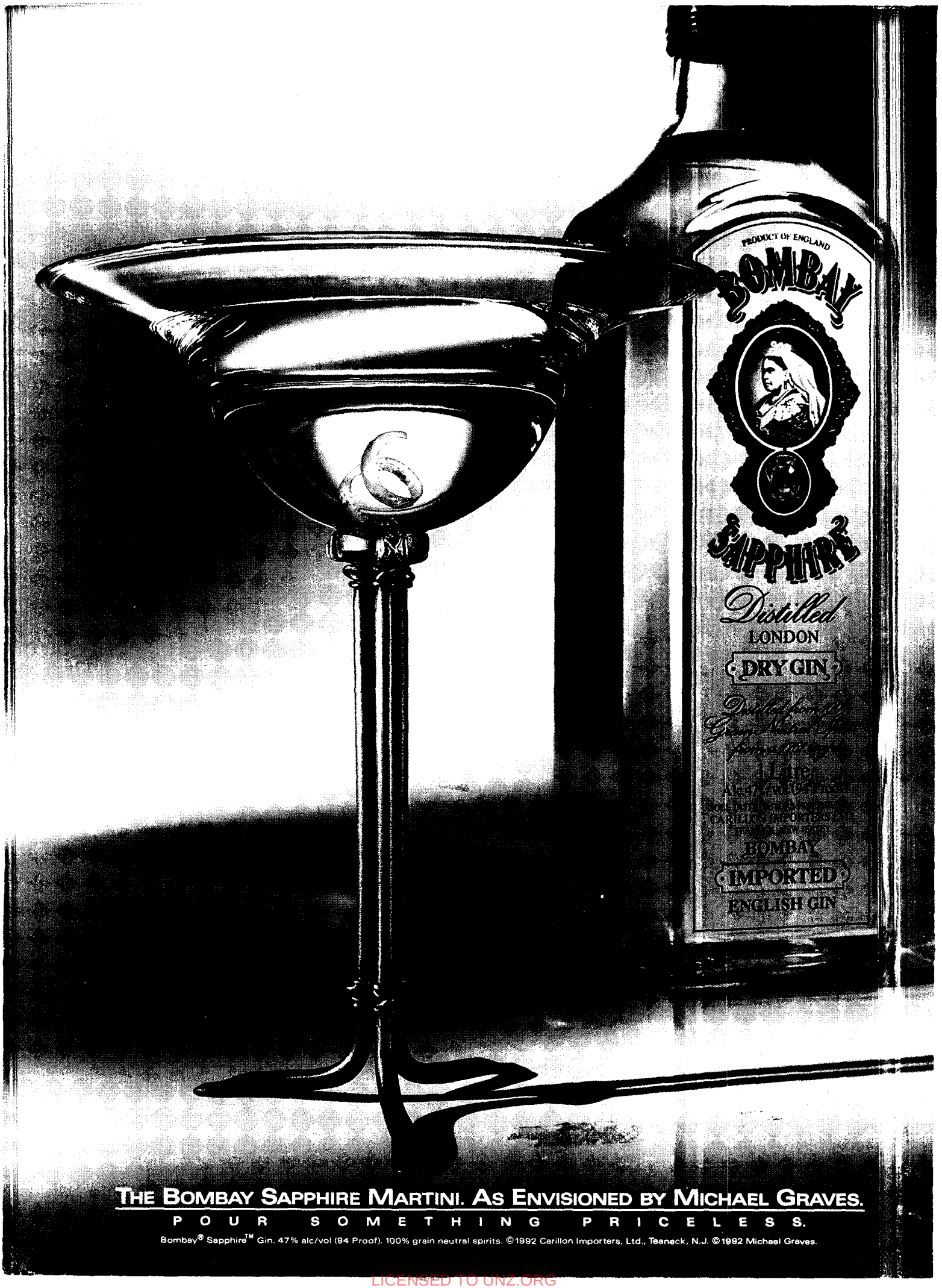

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